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FARMINGTON, NM — The ministry of the Episcopal Church among the Navajo took a giant step forward in late December when Yazzie Mason and Eloise Martinez were ordained deacons under the church's canon for indigenous ministries. Mr Mason and Mrs Martinez were chosen from congregations in Upper Fruitland and Farmington to study for the ordained ministry and both plan to continue their studies for eventual ordination to the priesthood. They were ordained by the Rt Rev Richard Trelease, Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande, and by the Rt Rev Otis Charles, Bishop of Utah and supervising Bishop of the Navajoland Episcopal Church. Here Bishop Trelease goes over details of the service with the ordinands. The sermon was preached by the Rev Steven T Plummer, the first Navajo to be ordained priest. Other firsts: this is the first use of the special ministries canon in this area, and the Rev Mrs Martinez is the first woman Navajo to be ordained.



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a male or female is constantly bombarded with masculine terminology and masculine imagery, the result is to form the conclusion, unconsciously, that all life is lived in the masculine gender, by the male sex, thus placing the female outside the boundaries of *human* life, in a world of her own. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the words for the male specific, "man," and the words "human" or "human being" are interchangeable; thus woman stands apart from human.

Another problem raised by using "man" and "men" to denote both males and females is that the woman is not sure when she is supposed to be included and when she is not. Sometimes the context of the statement is a clue. "We need some men to help move the pulpit and lectern following the service this morning," most likely means "males." "All mankind is one brotherhood" probably is intended to include women as well. However, statements like "All men are created equal" and "God calls men to the ministry" leave some question in our minds. "All men are created equal" is *said* to include women but in practice is often interpreted to mean "all males." "God calls men to the ministry" leaves a woman wondering whether women are not called or whether at this particular moment she is to consider herself and all women as "men." The perceptive woman soon discovers that while she has been told that "man" generically used includes her, in practice it is often interpreted to mean "Males Only." The ambiguity of the terms allows women to think they are included while in reality they often are definitely excluded.

Language has a powerful influence on our lives; it is not a trivial matter. Words form the bridges from one human being to another. We must always strive to see that these bridges go where we want them to go and that they are kept in good repair. When words no longer communicate what we thought they did or what we want them to communicate, it is time to use other words or even create new ones to express ourselves. This is what the Church is being called to do in the language of its worship.

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The Biblical Witness— Stumbling Block or Steppingstone?

THE BIBLE HAS often been used to support the status quo and in no area is this more true than in the role and rights of women. This practice runs contrary, however, to the basic message of Jesus, which calls for change—change in the lives of human beings and thus change in the world as a whole. To seek to keep things as they are because that's the way they've always been is contrary to the gospel message. God is always working for positive change. If we would work with God, we too must seek to transform the world and do away with those attitudes, customs, and theologies which are demeaning and dehumanizing to God's children, female or male.

One of the most common ways in which the Bible has been used against women, and thus misused, is by singling out specific passages which seem to portray women as inferior and holding up this idea as the absolute word of God. This amounts to a veritable worship of the biblical passage rather than of God, herself/himself—a kind of bibliolatry. God's revelation to human beings, including the biblical writers, is always distorted by our humanness, our imperfection, our own sinfulness. To say that every single passage in the Bible is the absolute truth of God is to claim unerring perception of God on the part of human beings, as well as to deify the cultural circumstances in which the revelation was given.

The Bible can be viewed somewhat like the proverbial forest that one can't see for the trees. By treating each and every passage as having equal value and significance to every other one, without ever looking at the main thrusts, the basic themes, one misses the larger meaning of what is said throughout the Bible.

In addition to using the Bible to justify the status quo, people have also used it to put women down. Beginning with the book of Genesis and the creation story, both men and women alike have interpreted the role and status of women to be inferior to that of men. Woman was created last (according to Genesis 2) and therefore she is of lesser importance in the eyes of God, being something of an afterthought. (Undoubtedly if Adam had been created last, he would still have been seen as having greater importance, being considered the very pinnacle of creation. In fact, the argument is often used that the human is greater than the other animals because Adam was created last, after all the rest of creation. If we follow that line of reasoning, should we not carry it out to its logical conclusion and say that woman is superior to man because she was created last?)

If the creation story is understood by Christians to be the theological basis for woman's inferiority to man, what then is to be done with the account of creation given in Genesis 1:26-31? For here woman is not created last but at the same time as man. If the fact of Eve's creation at a later point in time than Adam's and her being created out of Adam (Genesis 2:21-23) is proof positive of woman's inferiority, ought not her creation at the same time and from the same source as Adam (Genesis 1:26-31) be proof of her equality with men?

It is not surprising that the male-dominated early Christian Church sought to ignore the account in Genesis 1 when referring to the creation story as the theological basis for woman's inferiority. "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. *For Adam was formed first, then Eve* [our

italics]; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" (I Timothy 2:11-14). Here Eve's later appearance on earth is tied to the "fall," for which she is given the total blame.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, the second creation story is cited as justification for woman's lesser status. "For A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. (For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man)" I Corinthians 11:7-9. In all of this, the creation story from Genesis 1 is totally ignored. However it is not in Genesis 2, but only in Genesis 1 where the male and female are created together, that man (humanity) is affirmed to be made in God's image.

It is significant, then, that when Jesus refers to the creation story (in relation to marriage), he refers to the Genesis 1 account, saying, "But *from the beginning* [our italics] of creation, 'God made them male and female'" (Mark 10:6). Clearly he understood male and female to have been created equal "from the beginning."

Paul does go on, however, to attempt to counteract what he has just said. "Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman: for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" (I Corinthians 11:11-12).

Why is it that still today in our churches when the creation story is talked about and taught to little children it is almost always the second of the two stories that is told? Many people, including adults, are not even aware that another version of the story appears in the Bible. One can clearly see that the way we use the Bible greatly influences what we hear the Bible saying. If we totally ignore one of the creation stories, rather than holding them both in tension, we are likely to get a distorted message.

The passages which have caused the most controversy and

the most oppression for women are the ones which are usually attributed to the apostle Paul. Some of these passages undoubtedly were not written by Paul but by others, perhaps disciples of Paul. No matter who wrote them, however, they still have a great deal of power and authority for a large number of people in our churches today. Let's take a look at some of them.

The passage that is quoted frequently by those who would support the superiority of the male is one to which we have already referred, I Timothy 2:11-15: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty." We not only have the subordination of women held up as part of God's divine plan, stemming from only one of the creation accounts, but we have here a new addition to the gospel: Woman shall be saved through bearing children—if she also continues in the faith. This theology seems to be quite far removed from that of Jesus, who never once made mention of such a prerequisite for the salvation of women. In fact, when such an understanding was merely hinted at, Jesus quickly corrected it. To the woman in the crowd who shouted, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" Jesus responded, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:27b-28). Jesus saw no division in the requirements for men and women. Both were to be judged according to the same standards.

Another troublesome passage is found in Ephesians. Here the writer says, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is

subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her . . ." (Ephesians 5:21-26). Most people who use this verse as a model for the Christian marriage forget to read verse 21 which says that the general principal being outlined is that of *mutual* subjection. "Be subject to one another [our italics] out of reverence for Christ." They also ignore the meaning of the special injunction to husbands to love their wives "as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." The wife subjects herself to her husband because he first subjected himself to her ("We love because he first loved us"). Is not the author entreating the husband to be subject to the wife as much as the wife to the husband? In addition to interpreting the entire passage as one which is calling for the total domination of husbands over wives, a common error has been to carry the generalization beyond the marriage roles and insist upon the total submission of *all* women to *all* men. Surely that is not the intent of this passage.

A third and similar passage is found in the third chapter of Colossians in which the writer exhorts, "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them" (Colossians 3:18-19). Here again, the specific situation is the marital one and cannot be applied to the relationship of women and men beyond marriage. What is true for the husband-wife relationship need not be true for all relationships between the sexes. But, further, what we are reading about here is the accepted husband-wife relationship of an extremely patriarchal society which existed 2,000 years ago, not necessarily the God-ordained order of male-female husband-wife relationships for all time.

We must continually remind ourselves that the Bible was written by human beings who were deeply influenced by the culture in which they found themselves, just as we are today. Naturally, the culture would affect the way in which they wrote

about the revelations of God. It is indeed unfortunate that as we read the Bible we so often confuse the precepts of first-century Palestinian culture with absolute truth.

The Church has also used the Bible to oppress women by making special note that the Bible says Jesus chose only men for his closest disciples. Some denominations have long used this argument to deny women entrance to the ordained ministry or ordained priesthood. Let's look closer at this argument. First of all, it is true that Jesus did not choose any women to be a part of the inner circle of those nearest to him. What is the significance of that fact? It is commonly agreed that the twelve disciples "represented" the Twelve Tribes of Israel. It was also commonly understood that when the Messiah came he would reestablish the Twelve Tribes. Given the status of women in the Jewish religion, and the fact that ritually only males could be true Israelites in the fullest sense of the word, the symbolism of the Twelve Tribes would have been lost in the eyes of the Jewish community had women been included in the twelve. As to women being excluded from ministry because the twelve disciples were all male, it should be noted that the original apostles performed once and for all time the function of representing the Twelve Tribes of Israel. There is no reason to view the ordained minister of today as continuing that function. Women are not asking to be apostles, they are asking to be ministers. Of course, if one really insists that women should not be ordained because Jesus called no women, it should be pointed out that neither did Jesus call any Gentiles. Does that mean that only Jews should be ordained as Christian ministers?

Secondly, if Jesus had chosen women as a part of the twelve, they would have been subjected to an unnecessary amount of public ridicule by living so intimately with a group of men. In a time when women's relationships to men other than their husbands were minimal, it would have been most difficult for any women involved. Exposing women to that kind of ridicule

and loss of reputation was never a part of Jesus' ministry.

However, it should be noted that women were indeed a part of the larger group of disciples which followed Jesus around the countryside. Some of them even helped to support Jesus' ministry financially. Luke reports that Jesus "went on through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out; and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; and Susanna; and many others, who provided for them out of their means" (Luke 8:1-3). So women were definitely a part of Jesus' public ministry even though they were not a part of the inner circle.

In fact, one of the main thrusts of Jesus' ministry and of the New Testament is the affirmation of the worth of women and their equality with men. Not once is there recorded an incident in Jesus' ministry nor any words of his which indicate that women are second to men in any way. To the contrary, his every relationship with women affirmed their dignity as persons equal with men in the sight of God. Of course, in order to do so Jesus had to break severely with the status quo which denied women such worth.

Many of us, reading the Gospels out of a twentieth-century background, are not aware of the tremendous significance of Jesus' actions toward women. For instance, it seems only natural that Jesus would talk with a woman at the well where he stopped for a drink of water. Once we become aware of the fact that rabbis (teachers) in that culture did not ordinarily speak with women in public, Jesus' action takes on new meaning. It was felt that a learned man such as a rabbi was simply wasting his time talking about religious concerns with women or indeed talking with them at all. Thus, there was a great deal of prejudice against such conversations between the sexes. This particu-

lar story is often interpreted as indicating Jesus' lack of prejudice against Samaritans, but the remark made by the writer of John indicates something else at work here. "Just then the disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a *woman* . . . (our italics, John 4:27). It should also be noted that Jesus was not just passing the time of day with this woman; he was revealing for the first time that he was the expected Messiah. "The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am he' " (John 4:25, 26).

In a similar instance, in the home of his good friends Mary and Martha, Jesus encouraged a woman to listen and converse with him about spiritual matters. When Martha complained to Jesus that Mary wasn't playing the traditional feminine role of preparing and serving food to the men, Jesus affirmed that Mary was doing the right thing. "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:38). Unfortunately, the church has not generally paid much attention to this passage and has insisted that the "proper" role for women in the church is not the intellectual one but rather that of the housekeeper, thereby denying both women and men the opportunity to choose how they will use their own unique and God-given talents.

Still another incident from Jesus' ministry bears examination, namely that a woman (or women) was the first witness to his resurrection. Most Christians are so used to hearing the Easter story that much of its impact concerning women is lost. While we've grown accustomed to hearing how Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene after the resurrection, we've missed the real significance of this appearance. To make a woman the first witness to such an extraordinary and significant event was totally unknown in Jesus' time. In fact, in the society of Jesus' day the witness of women was not even acceptable in a court of law.

In spite of this, Jesus appeared first of all to a woman. Partly because of the extraordinariness of the event, but partly out of a lack of trust in the words of women, the men refused to believe them: "but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (Luke 24:11).

In the new order which Jesus is ushering in, women are to be given their rightful status and dignity as daughters of God, equal in every way to the sons of God. If in a fallen, unredeemed state women were seen as inferior to men: "yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Genesis 3:16); now that the world has been redeemed through Jesus Christ, woman is to be restored to her rightful place as equal to man.

Nowhere is woman's status in this new order made more clear than in Paul's dramatic reversal of the old prayer of thanksgiving prayed daily by the Jewish males. Paul, being a devout Jew, no doubt prayed with his fellow Jews, "Praised be God that he has not created me a Gentile; praised be God that he has not created me a woman; praised be God that he has not created me an ignorant man" (or a slave). When Paul became a Christian, however, he said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). In Christ there is a new order of creation.

At various times in history the truth of Paul's statement has been seriously questioned, but out of the controversies came a greater appreciation of and affirmation of the truth it embodies. In the first century, one of the arguments revolved around the line, "There is neither Jew nor Greek." There were those who insisted that in order to be "in Christ" one must first become a Jew by submitting to circumcision. The essence of this position was to contend that there was indeed both Jew and Greek and that being a Jew was in some sense better than being a Greek since Jewishness was a prerequisite for becoming a Christian. In the nineteenth century the second line of that passage was

severely tested by the Church as it struggled with the question of slavery, finally deciding that human slavery was inconsistent with the Christian faith. Now, in the twentieth century, it is our turn to struggle with the final line in that trilogy: "There is neither male nor female." What does that statement mean in relation to sexist worship? What does it say about the stereotyping of roles within the Church? About decision making at all levels of the Church? About the witness the Church makes to society in regard to women? About the seriousness or lack of seriousness with which the Church takes the liberation of women?

Is the Bible a stumbling block to women's liberation? We think not. It is our conviction that the overwhelming witness of the Bible, and the New Testament in particular, is a witness for the full personhood of all people, including women. Specifically, this also means a clear call for the elimination of sexist attitudes and traditions within the worship service. Sexist worship, as worship is usually conducted in most Christian churches today, goes against the teachings of Jesus. If we would follow Christ in treating women as whole persons, significant in the eyes of God, we must begin today to affirm the worth of women within the context of worship.



Freeing Our Concept of God from Sexism

GOD AS MOTHER. "Impossible!" you say? "Blasphemy!" "Sure, we call God "he" but I really don't think of God as a man, as being part of the male sex. After all, though, didn't Jesus himself call God "Father"?

What makes us so reluctant to think of God in feminine terms? Have masculinity and divinity become so bound up with each other that it is blasphemous to think of God as feminine?

Perhaps it would be helpful in dealing with this question to look first at why Jesus might have addressed God as "Father" and asked us to do the same. Jesus was trying to express that God loves all human beings, regardless of wealth, position, or status. One of the best metaphors to use in getting this idea across is the metaphor of the father who loves his children, and not merely tolerates them. In a patriarchal society such as the one in which Jesus lived, what better image could he use to indicate God's care and concern? By calling God "Father," Jesus was also saying that God is accessible; we should communicate with God in much the same way we communicate with another human being, such as our earthly father.

Finally, Jesus was saying that God is due the same kind of respect that children in a patriarchal society gave their father. None of these ideas is betrayed today, however, by calling God "Mother."

18. Augustine, *de grat. Ch. et pecc. orig.* 2,39; *de nupt. et concup.* 1,19; *de bono conj.* 17; *de Genesi ad lit.* 9,7.

19. Eg. John Chrysostom, *Epist. ad Ephes.*; *hom.* 13; *hom.* 22; and *hom.* 26,8.

20. Augustine, *Ep.* 262, to Ecducia.

21. Augustine, *de bono conj.* 17-20; *de nupt. et concup.* 1,9-10.

22. John Chrysostom, *Epis. ad Ephes.*; *hom.* 26,8; also Augustine, *de conj. adult.* 2,15.

23. Compare Jerome, *adv. Jov.* 1,36; Augustine, *de nupt. et concup.* 1,14-15; *de bono conj.* 10,13; *de bono viduit.* 8-11; *de sancta virg.* 9,9,16.

24. This common image contrasting marriage, widowhood and virginity according to the 30, 60 and 100 fold harvest of Mark 4,20 is found repeatedly in the Fathers; eg. Cyprian, *de habitu virg.* 21; Athanasius, *Ep.* 48,2; Tertullian, *de exhort. cast.* 1; Jerome, *Epp.* 22,15; 48,3; 66,2; 120, 1,9; *Adv. Jov.* 1,3; Augustine, *de sancta virg.* 45; Ambrose, *de virg.* 1,60.

25. Cyprian, *de habitu virg.* 22; Jerome, *Ep.* 130,8; *Comm. in Epist. ad Ephes.* 3,5; *adv. Helvid.* 22; Leander of Seville, *de instit. virg.*

26. Jerome, *Ep.* 117.

27. A fuller exposition of the material of this chapter is found in my chapter on "Misogynism and Virginal Feminism in the Fathers of the Church," in the book edited by this author, *Images of Women in the Judaeo-Christian Tradition* (Simon and Schuster, 1973).

Chapter 7

Is Christianity Misogynist? The Failure of Women's Liberation in the Church

The oppression of women is undoubtedly the oldest form of oppression in human history. From the dawn of history the physical lightness of the woman's body (which has nothing to do with biological inferiority) and the fact that the woman is the childbearer have been used to subordinate the woman to the man in a chattel status and to deprive women of the leadership possibilities and the cultural development of the dominant group. The oppression of women can be seen as falling into two distinct cultural stages, corresponding to tribal societies and classical civilizations, while the liberation of women awaits the flowering of that modern civilization which has overcome the dichotomized reality principle of classical cultures. Religions have played a key role in both stages, since it was religion that formulated the world view and prescribed the rituals which inculcated that world view at each stage of consciousness.

The tribal period is one which must be studied much more carefully relative to the oppression of women. There was a time when the tribal period was seen as a time of female dominance, of "matriarchy," while the oppression of women

came in only with private property and the division of labor in classical civilizations. Marxist theory preserved a version of this nineteenth century anthropology. The tribal period thus became a kind of "golden age" that served as a point of reference for the future liberation. It now appears clear that "matriarchy" was a method of reckoning descent through the mother, but this never entailed women as the power-holders in society. Agricultural societies clearly developed a different symbolism than hunting and nomadic societies. Women were innovators in the technology of agriculture at an early period and the connection of women and the earth as the sources of fecundity gave feminine symbols and feminine goddesses a primacy in agricultural religions.

In pastoral and hunting societies the disability of the woman, especially when pregnant, was more evident. In these societies strict segregation of women from the male hunting lodge, where the tribesmen prepared themselves for hunting and war, was developed. H. A. Hays, in his comprehensive volume on the history of the oppression of women, *The Dangerous Sex; The Myth of Feminine Evil* details the exorbitant disabilities heaped on women in these tribal societies. Normative sexuality was defined from the perspective of male sexuality. From this perspective the woman was seen as a deviant, an aberration. The vagina was seen as a wound, and the fact that a woman bled from the vagina a mark of castration. Terrible fears and taboos built up around this strange interpretation of woman's sexuality as a wound and a castration which might, through some evil influence, be visited upon the male penis. (It is interesting to see that Freud, whose views were taken to be "scientific," reproduces a psychological doctrine based essentially on this ancient misconception.) The aberrant or castrated sexuality of women was interpreted as "bad mana" from which men must rigidly protect themselves. Menstruation, childbirth, everything connected with the sexuality of women, and finally, even the very presence of women, came to be seen as "unclean"; a debilitating influence that might threaten the virility of the male. Women were isolated from each other and hedged in with elaborate purification rituals which often forced

them to live by themselves in places of harsh segregation during large parts of their lives. Social relations were severely restricted, so that women, while preparing the food for the family, often were not allowed to sit at table with the men, but must hide in the back of the house lest their presence during the consumption of the strength-giving food cast an evil spell on male power.

By contrast, the male lodge became the place of male bonding and reinforcement in power. The relations of the males in the male lodge were at once both hierarchical and sado-masochistic, and these painful homosexual rituals were an intrinsic part of that male bonding that fit the tribesmen, as a caste, for hunting and war. Mysterious noises from the bull-roarer and other instruments emitted from the male lodge, reinforcing the males in their sense of collective power, while frightening the women who were strictly excluded from knowing anything of what was taking place inside. Hays sees this male lodge and its rituals as the precursor of all those exclusively male fraternities, from armies to monasteries to press clubs, where men reinforce themselves in their power against women, and practice a strict pecking order among themselves.

The practices described by Hays as characteristic of hunting tribes would seem to have little connection with higher religions, yet, in fact, these practices were carried over into the great basins of civilization when hunting and nomadic peoples invaded and settled these regions. Israel was just such a tribe, and it canonized the ancient taboos and rituals of uncleanness against women in the Torah and the Talmud and thus passed down this set of attitudes and practices to the present day. This view of women as ritually unclean was transmitted to Christianity, in turn, and shapes to a remarkable extent the laws about women in classical Christian canon law. As Clara Maria Henning, one of the few Roman Catholic canon lawyers in the world, says in her article on the attitude toward women in Catholic canon law,¹ the basic concept of women in canon law is the ancient concept of uncleanness, extended into the Christian ascetic idea of woman as a sexual threat. Most of the laws having to do with women revolve around elaborate exclusions from contact with priests and contact with the sacred ceremo-

nies where priests preside. These laws command women to cover their heads, forbid them to approach the altar during the celebration or to enter the sanctuary during Mass; exclude them from acting as servers at Mass, and even discourage them from singing and other participation. Not surprisingly, in the light of what we have said about the origins of these attitudes in ancient tribal taboos, the most vehement laws against women revolve around their sexual uncleanness during menstruation and childbearing. This view of women as unclean was crucial in the final demise of the institution of deaconesses in the early Church. It surrounded women with a ritual of purification after childbirth, and forbade her, at certain points in the Church's history, from taking communion or even entering the church during menstruation.

It might have been thought that the rise of the classical civilizations might have overcome these disabilities heaped upon women in hunting societies, since now mental quickness, rather than physical prowess, became the more important power. Woman's wit is clearly equal to that of the man. Therefore the transformation from physical to mental power should have given women the opportunity to overcome these ancient taboos. However, instead, the prejudice against women was translated into the intellectual sphere, and men reconfirmed their right to be the stronger by declaring that they alone possessed genuine mental power and all the spiritual virtues that went with it, while women were identified with the body and what was seen as the "lower psyche." Thus the actual capacity of women to intellectual equality and to parity within a civilization based on cultural rather than physical prowess was elaborately suppressed in classical civilizations by a cultural denial to women of these capacities and the institutionalization of this denial through the exclusion of women from opportunities for education and formation in higher culture. This exclusion of women from education lasted down into the late nineteenth century, when women fought a long battle to be admitted first to secondary and then to higher education, encountering male opposition at every step of the way. Not too surprisingly, the

argument that was constantly used against the right of women to education was the insistence that woman lacked such capacity by nature, and that she was peculiarly tied up, psychosomatically, with childbearing, so that any diversion of her "blood" to her brain would divert it from the one place that it was necessary, namely her womb, and render her infertile! Clergymen were the warmest advocates of this particular piece of misinformation.²

Classical civilizations created a dualistic view of soul and body as an expression of their struggle to assert the ascendancy of the intellectual principle over the givenness of the human condition. But they also repressed the possibility for the liberation of women that arose out of that development, by equating soul-body dualism with male-female dualism, and thus reestablishing the subordination of women in new form. Christianity, in this respect, was the heir and bearer of the culture of classical civilization. And the study of the attitude toward women in the Church Fathers reveals dramatically both sides of this new development; the potential for the liberation of women through the affirmation of the superiority of the spiritual to the somatic principle, and the suppression of this possibility by equating the feminine with the bodily principle.

The dualistic anthropology, which Christianity absorbed from Platonism, created a distinct tension between its ascetic spirituality and the body-affirming doctrine of creation which was found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Eastern Christian theology tried to solve this conflict by defining the original creation as spiritual and monistic and ascribing the "gross" body and bi-sexuality to the fall.³ Latin theology, in St. Augustine, for example, attempted to affirm the bi-sexual, bodily character of the original creation, but in a way that equated soul-body dualism with male-female dualism. Thus the spiritual image of God (made in the image of the divine *Logos*—Christ) in man became essentially male, and femaleness was equated with the lower, corporeal nature.

For Augustine, the original Adam was unitary in person, but compound in nature, consisting of male spirit and female

bodiliness. When Eve was taken from the side of Adam, she stood for the bodily "side" of man which was taken from him in order to serve him as a helpmate. But she is a helpmate solely for the task of procreation, in which she is alone indispensable. For any spiritual task, another male would be more suitable.⁴ So the purpose of woman's existence was defined essentially in terms of childbearing. Other than this there is no reason for the existence of woman. Inexplicably, Augustine also affirms that Eve too has a rational spirit, being also a compound of body and spirit. But Augustine persists in speaking of woman, in relation to the male, as standing for the relation of body to spirit. Moreover, he consistently defines this relationship as woman's "nature."⁵ He thus concludes that the male alone possesses the full image of God, whereas woman, when taken by herself, does not possess the full image of God, but only when taken together with the male who "is her head."⁶ Woman is therefore defined as a *relative being*, who exists only in relationship to the male, who alone possesses full autonomous personhood. This view of woman is perhaps the ultimate core of misogyny.

This assimilation of male-female dualism into soul-body dualism conditions the definition of woman both in terms of the order of nature and in terms of the condition of the fall. In the order of nature woman is essentially subordinate to the man, just as the body is essentially subordinate to the mind in that right ordering of body to spirit that is defined as "original justice." (!) But because ascetic spirituality defined sin as the disordering of the flesh to the spirit, which made the mind the subject of passions, the equation of woman with body also made her peculiarly the symbol of sin. This double definition of woman, as submissive body in the order of nature, and "carnality" in the disorder of sin, allows the Church Fathers to slip somewhat inconsistently from the second to the first, and attribute an inferiority in women that is sinful to woman's "nature." In some of the Church Fathers, such as Tertullian, the sinfulness of woman is equated with her primary responsibility for the original fall of man. Tertullian speaks of woman's role in the fall by such epithets as "the Devil's gateway," and

sees her nature as permanently marked by her special guilt in causing the fall of man, leading up to the necessity for the death of Christ.⁷

St. Augustine is somewhat more temperate in his diatribes against Eve as the cause of the fall. Augustine's stress falls much more on the natural inferiority of women, as body, in the relation of body to mind in the right ordering of nature. For him, the fall could occur only when the mind consents to "go along," and not simply when the body "tempts." But this does not imply a milder view of sin, but rather a more contemptuous view of woman's ability to cause the fall "by herself."⁸

This assimilation of femaleness into bodiliness allows Augustine to explain woman's subjugation in the order of nature, but it makes for some contradiction when it comes to defending woman's redeemability; her capacity, like the male, to overcome the body and rise to the higher, spiritual nature (the Patristic definition of redemption). Augustine attempts to explain this contradiction by distinguishing what woman *is*, where she is equivalent to the male, and what she *symbolizes* in her bodily nature, where she stands for the subjugation of body to spirit in nature and that debasing carnality which draws the male mind down from its heavenly heights to "wallow in the flesh." As he puts it in his *Soliloquies*:

I feel that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of woman and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.⁹

But since Augustine identifies this that woman "symbolizes," with her "nature," this creates a strange schizophrenia in the relation of the male to the female in marriage. The man is exhorted to love his wife's spiritual nature, but to despise in her all her bodily functions as woman and wife:

A good Christian is found, toward one and the same woman, to love the creature of God whom he desires to be transformed and renewed, but to hate in her the corruptible and mortal conjugal connection, sexual intercourse and all that pertains to her as a wife.¹⁰

It never occurs to Augustine that this definition of woman's nature in terms of what she "symbolizes" in the eye of the male perception, rather than in terms of what she is in herself, might be precisely a disorder in the eye of the male perceiver, and therefore in no sense a stance for the definition of woman's nature! But, for Augustine, as for the tradition of male dominance generally, this androcentric perspective, which reduced woman to "body" *vis à vis* the male eye, is never questioned, but is presumed. The essence of male ideology can be said to be contained precisely in this cultural relationship, where the woman is the one acted upon and defined by the male perception and "use," and her own self-definition and perspective are never heard or incorporated culturally. Women, as all oppressed people, live in a culture of silence, as objects, never subjects of the relationship.

The definition of woman as body lends itself to an identification of the female psyche and personality as peculiarly characterized by "carnal" traits. To woman's "mind" are attributed essentially the traits of pettiness, sensuality, materialism and maliciousness, while all the virtues of the mind, such as chastity, patience, wisdom, temperance, fortitude and justice, are equated with masculinity.¹¹ This comes about with a kind of spiritualizing of the primitive equation of all that is "strong" with the male; all that is weak with the female.

This definition of woman, both physically and psychically, in terms of the lower nature, creates a peculiar contradiction when it comes time to defend the ability of the "virgin" to overcome this lower nature and be redeemed. It becomes characteristic of the Fathers, the ascetic writers especially, to speak of the virgin as having become "male," by transcending the female nature, physically and psychically. The very possibility of redemption through spiritualization is thus, for woman, "unnatural"; a transcendence of her "nature"; whereas the male ascetic is seen as being restored to his natural male spirituality through redemption. This view extended itself into a debate over the sexual character of the risen body. It was natural to conclude, therefore, that in the resurrection from the dead, there would be only males, females being transformed into males.

(This is analogous to the racist view in Mormonism that only whites are redeemable, so the Negro can be saved only by being transformed into a white person.) Augustine and Jerome both assert that mankind will arise in both male and female bodies, but they too find the incompatibility so strong that they must modify this view by asserting that these bodies will be spiritual and lacking in all sensual libido, the female risen body in particular having been deprived of those organs having to do with intercourse and childbearing, so that the female body becomes "suited to glory rather than to shame."

What this angelic hysterectomy is supposed to mean is anyone's guess, but it illustrates graphically the dilemma of Patristic anthropology. They wish to affirm a doctrine of redemption that coheres with the original bodily, bi-sexual nature which God had declared "very good" in the beginning; but since they have declared this to be "very bad" and define redemption as the overcoming of the body, sexual relationship and female nature, they can only affirm this continuity by peculiarly mutilating redemption or creation or both in these particular characteristics.

The Fathers never entirely deny, although they often seem to forget, that woman too has a spiritual nature equivalent to that of the male. Indeed this affirmation is assumed in that view which allows the woman, as well as the man, to become a "virgin" and to rise to the "higher life" of monistic spirituality. But since woman is also made, in her bodily nature, peculiarly the symbol of body in relation to the (male) mind and associated with all the sensual and depraved characteristics of psychology through this corporeality, her salvation then is seen, not as an affirmation of her (feminine) nature, but a transcendence of her (feminine) nature to a higher (male) possibility. Such a view forces upon the female ascetic both a redoubled subjugation of her body and personality in ascetic practices, and also an abasement of her "image," so that she will no longer appear as an attractive female body before the male visual perception. This obsession with blotting out the female bodily image explains that peculiar concern in Patristic literature with matters of female dress, adornment and physical appearance

which still agitates the relationship of the Vatican congregation for religious in its relation to its daughters! The woman must be stripped of all adornment that reveals or enhances her femininity. She must bear an unshapely dress and veil that conceal her face and limbs. Finally, she must literally destroy her physical appearance with dirt and fasting, so that she becomes unsightly. As Tertullian puts it, in his treatise, *de cultu feminarum*:

It is time for you to know that not merely must the pageantry of fictitious and elaborate beauty be rejected by you, but even that natural grace must be obliterated by concealment and negligence, as equally dangerous to the glances of the beholder's eye.¹²

The definition of sin as sexual and bodily feeling, of course, creates that rigid view of the right purpose and use of sex characteristic of Augustine, that has traditionally denied the possibility of birth control. Since women are the childbearers, this means, in effect, the denial of the right of women to limit or control the effects of male sexual use of their bodies. When the denial of birth control is taken together with the view (also accepted by the Fathers), that woman stands in a chattel relation to the male in marriage, i.e., the husband has a proprietary right over his wife's body, which forbids the wife to deny her husband sexual access to her at any time, the subordination of woman to biological necessity becomes complete.

Augustine believed that, in the original creation, there would have been bi-sexual, but non-sensual, reproduction. In paradise woman would have been perfectly submissive to the male, just as the body would have been perfectly submissive to the mind. Just as every organ and muscle in the body would have been completely under the control and command of the mind; i.e., man would have been able to whistle tunes with his anus (!), so the female (body) would also have been perfectly submissive to the mind of the directing male. Man would have used the female body for reproduction, but in a completely dispassionate way, just as the farmer sows his seed in the furrow of a field. This act would have been entirely purposive; i.e., done solely for procreation, and would have been devoid of all

sensual feelings.¹³ Man's sexual organ would have been totally under the control of his rational mind, so that he would have moved it to its purpose just as he moves his hand or his foot now, without any rush of sensual feeling accompanying this act. Thus, in Augustine's view, rightly ordered sex is such as to be depersonalized, unfeeling and solely instrumental. It relates to the woman literally as a "baby making machine"; i.e., a body whose sole purpose for existence is to be used as the incubator of the male seed.

When, however, man sins, he loses the "original justice" of this ordering of body to mind. Sinful "carnality," signifying the revolt of the sensual principle against its "head," enters in. Then the male loses control over his sexual organ, which begins to respond with a "will of its own" to the female bodily presence. This Augustine sees as the exemplification of the principle of sin, whereby the "law of the members wars against the law of the mind."¹⁴ For Augustine, then, the spontaneous tumescence of the male penis, in response to sensual stimuli, and independent of conscious control, is the very essence of sin. He proceeded to construct his whole doctrine of the transmission of sin around this view.

Ideally, the married couple should give themselves to the sexual act solely for the purpose of procreation. Otherwise they should be continent. However, since the fall, this dispassionate and wholly instrumental use of sex, such as would have existed in paradise is no longer possible. The sexual organs have been disordered by sin and so cause an unruly by-product of sensual pleasure, whether the couple will or not. Augustine sees this spontaneous libido as intrinsically sinful. It is forgiven to the married couple only if it is not intended, if it is despised by them, and their intention remains solely that of procreation. But the sinful character of the means, nevertheless, conditions the end product in the child, who is born thereby tainted with Original Sin.¹⁵ This then is the means whereby the original sin of Adam, with its disordering of the relation of flesh to spirit, is transmitted from generation to generation through the sexual act.

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For the Fathers, marriage has the lowest place of honor in the scheme of Christian life. Now that Christ has come, marriage is still allowable, but no longer necessary, since marrying and giving in marriage has been superseded by the new order of the Resurrection. The blessings upon procreation from the Old Testament, therefore, have been rescinded. Procreation is not forbidden, to be sure, but it has become redundant and dis-

tracting. It would be better if all men imitated the way of Christian perfection and refrained from procreation, so that the world could come to an end the faster, and the new world of the Resurrection could dawn in its entirety, according to Augustine.²³ If a Christian is truly converted, he will become continent. The married life thus falls at the bottom of the hierarchy of virtue, falls below that 100-fold virtue of virginity, or the 60-fold virtue of widowhood.²⁴ The life of continence is the only life fully compatible with the Christian life of spiritual regeneration.

The highest ideal of life, then, for the woman is virginity. Here alone does woman rise to spirituality, personhood and equality with the male. But only at the expense of crushing out of her being all vestiges of her bodily and her female "natures" and rising to "unnatural manliness." But this regeneration is not seen as releasing the woman for a boldness and autonomy, since the condition for this release of her spiritual principle is that total abasement of her body and her female image which, *de facto*, lies under obedience to male authority. This assertion that female virginity in no way undid the hierarchical relation of male to female in the Church clearly ran into some real contradiction during the first period of the Christian ascetic movement. The Church Fathers, unwittingly, in their ascetic doctrines, released a movement of women's liberation which suggested a far fuller equality of male and female under the new order of the Resurrection. Again and again the early ascetic writers enunciated the principle that Eve was punished for her sin by the twofold marks of bearing children in sorrow and being under the authority of the husband. In choosing the life of virginity, the woman was declared to have thrown off both of these marks of Eve's punishment.²⁵ While it was fairly easy to see how the virgin no longer bore children in sorrow (since she bore no children at all), the implication of virginity as releasing women from male subjugation was clearly one that the Church Fathers were quite unwilling to push to its logical conclusions. But there was a powerful movement of feminine asceticism in the fourth century and thereafter which

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If the couple actually intend to enjoy carnal pleasure, although also intending and not impeding procreation, Augustine sees this as sinful, but venially so, since it is allowable under that apostolic concession that it is better to "marry than to burn." It was this second purpose of the sexual act that was spoken of as the "remedy for concupiscence." But it is allowable only as a concession to weakness and is not a good in itself.¹⁶ Finally, if the couple desires "only" carnal pleasure and impedes procreation (and this would include the rhythm method, for Augustine, which was practiced by the Manichaeans), the act is wholly sinful and equivalent to fornication.¹⁷ Such a narrow view of sex follows from a depersonalized definition of the sexual relationship, which is seen either as instrumental or narcissistically carnal. The possibility of bodily relation as an interpersonal relationship or a vehicle of love, is essentially eliminated. Augustine does speak of a third purpose of marriage as a "symbol" of unity, mirroring the relationship of Christ to the Church, but he never develops this as an interpersonality that could be expressed through the sexual act itself. Indeed this third purpose remains wholly undefined in his thought, and he speaks of the possibility of friendship between the married as arising only when the sexual act is no longer used, as in old people.¹⁸

This depersonalization of the sexual act and through it the depersonalization of woman must be seen as the reflection of that fundamental assimilation of male-female relation into soul-body relation. This implies a subject-object relationship between men and women. For the soul-body relationship corresponds to the subject-object relationship between the subject and that external reality which is reduced to the status of a "thing" to be "used." This subject-object relationship has, as its basic characteristic, the negating of the other as a "thou" or equivalent "subject," and therefore abolishes the possibility of a relation to the "other" as one of mutuality and intersubjectivity. The translation of male-female dualism in Christianity into soul-body dualism, therefore, blotted out in classical spirituality, the possibility of bodily relationship as a meeting of persons. It constricted it into the framework of a relation of a subject to

an object to be "used." Woman, then, was defined literally as a "sex object," either to be rightly used, for procreation, or wrongly used, narcissistically, for carnal pleasure. In either case, woman as a person never appears in the relationship.

This view of sexuality determines the three basic images of women in the Church Fathers; woman as whore; woman as wife and woman as virgin. As whore, woman represents sinful carnality which is the essence of the fall. Here, woman is depicted as the bold strumpet, strutting forth in all her natural and artificial bodily allures. Here, woman incarnates the very character of the sensual principle in revolt against its "head," that subverts the right ordering between mind and sense.

As wife, woman is also defined as body, but now as submissive body, obedient to her "head," that stands for the proper relationship of the sensual to the intellectual principle. The ideal for the wife was one of total servility and meekness, even under harsh and unjust treatment. The wife is seen as having no personal rights autonomously, either over her mind or over her body. Mentally she is said to have "no head," but to submit to her husband who "is her head," while, on the bodily level the husband has complete proprietary rights to her body and the property of the household.¹⁹ This rigid view of the mental and psychical subjugation of the wife is illustrated in a letter which Augustine wrote to the North African matron Ecducia.²⁰ This woman apparently had chosen a life of continence that had become contrary to her husband's wishes, although he had originally agreed to it. Augustine allows her to continue only because the husband had once agreed, but he severely rebukes her for her disposal of family property without her husband's permission. He enunciates the basic principles which guide his view, in the process. Women may never, independently, choose continence, or deny sexual use of their bodies to their husbands, because the woman has "no head of her own," but belongs to her husband, who "is her head," and it is a sin for the woman to refuse to her husband the "debt" of her body.

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an instrument for procreation. Augustine even rationalizes Old Testament polygamy on these grounds, arguing that these ancient worthies gave themselves such excessive "marrying and giving in marriage," without experiencing any sensual pleasure, but solely in obedience to God's command to (hurry up and) increase and multiply, so they might all the sooner make up the whole of the race of Israel from which the messiah was to be born. Polygamy was admissible for this purpose, although polyandry would have been unacceptable, since, as Augustine puts it, "nature allows multiplicity in subjugations, but demands singularity in dominations," just as many members may serve the one head in the body, and many slaves the one master, but not vice versa.²¹ Here we can see how fundamental it was for Augustine to equate male-female dualism with soul-body dualism in a way that defines that relationship essentially as one of domination and subjugation. The husband was, of course, exhorted to love his wife and not abuse her, but again this is said to be as he would "love his own body," and because it would demean his dignity as the "head" to do otherwise.²² It is not because women have any autonomous dignity as persons, or rights over their own bodies relative to the male. Such a theory of married women in Christianity not only did not lift up the social position of women beyond what it had been in antiquity, but even fell below those modest legal rights to personal and economic autonomy which women had been winning under later Roman law. Thus the frequent claim that Christianity elevated the position of woman must be denied. It actually lowered the position of woman relative to the more enlightened legislation of later Roman society, and elevated woman only in her new role as "virgin."

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clearly read this doctrine quite differently, and did indeed assume that the choice of the life of continence released them from male authority in general, and not merely in the literal sense that they had no husbands to whom to be subjugated. Thus many women flocked to the life of continence, either by refusing to marry or else by separating from their husbands to form communities of women, and were claiming thereby a freedom and equality with men. One peculiar expression of this was the "spiritual marriage" in which the virgin lived in a spiritual relationship with a male ascetic. In some cases this probably worked to the disadvantage of women, who were forced into a kind of housekeeper relationship. But clearly, in the case of a strong-minded female ascetic, it could constitute something like a free love relationship, as is evident from some of Jerome's horrified descriptions of this possibility.²⁶ The idea that the woman who chose continence freed herself from the twofold curse of Eve of childbearing and male domination was leading many women in this period to abandon their children and household responsibilities, and depart to found communities of women. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the Church brought this female ascetic movement under control, but arguing simultaneously that, while virginity did raise the woman above her "female nature" to a virility and spiritual equality with the male, this in no way detracted from male authority, because the condition for this spiritualization was her self-abasement, humility and obedience to God (*de facto* exercised by male authority in the Church). The insistence that the male alone could represent Christ in the priesthood (since he alone possesses that spiritual image of God that mirrors the divine Word), and the continuation of the Jewish ideas of woman's uncleanness, operated to exclude women from any positions of authority in the Church and thus to insure that, however high a woman might rise in the female ascetic ranks, there would always be a male authority above her. Needless to say this tension between the female ascetic movement and male authority is exploding all over again in

contemporary Catholicism, having been successfully repressed for fourteen hundred years!

Thus the potential of the female ascetic movement to express the liberation of women within the framework of classical religion was largely repressed in Christianity through the very dualism in which the liberation of the spiritual principle from the body was perceived. At each point the women found femininity equated with bodiliness to re-subordinate her, even as an ascetic, to the right of the stronger, now interpreted spiritually as the right of the male to monopolize intellectual power and identify it with masculinity.

Nevertheless the ascetic movement in late antiquity did raise up a new cultural ideal of the "spiritual woman," who, through the conquest of the body, could rise to spiritual personhood equal to that of the male and could even achieve the life of intellectual contemplation that led to the ultimate *summum bonum* of communion with God. Women now, for the first time, were conceded the possibility of the highest spiritual achievement, from which they were generally excluded among Greek philosophers (although late antiquity did see one great woman philosopher, Hypatia). Judaism, by contrast, systematically excluded women from living the life of the scholar. In Christianity women, normally, and in great numbers, were admitted to the highest ideals of ascetic spirituality. Fourth and fifth century Christianity, moreover, saw a great flowering of cultural imagery related to spiritual femininity. Much of the literature of the period was constructed around the figure of the woman as seer, muse or revealer of spiritual truths, from the figure of "Dame Church," who speaks to the worried Christian in the *Shepherd of Hermas* in the second century, to "Dame Philosophia" who is Boethius' muse in prison four centuries later. As the Virgin Psyche, the feminine principle in the soul was represented as the human partner in the nuptial mystery of the communion of the soul with Christ in mystical ecstasy. As the Bridal Church, woman represents mankind in its eschatological union with God. All these images of spiritual

womanhood were gathered together to make up that Mariology which flowered, together with the ascetic movement, in the fourth and fifth centuries. The culmination of this elevation of spiritual femininity was the doctrine of Mary's Assumption, a characteristic doctrine of this period of the Church's history. The doctrine of the Assumption grew up first in Egypt in the early fourth century, in the cradle of Christian asceticism, and spread from there essentially along with the spread of the ascetical movement. In the doctrine of the Assumption, the "Spiritual Woman" was raised to the very heavens, to take her place beside the Jewish Ancient of Days and his Son Messiah who once had ruled from the Cherubim Throne in exclusive patriarchal splendor. An early precedent for this, however, was set within Judaism itself which used the femininity of the word "spirit" in Hebrew to speak of God's Spirit as the "Eldest daughter of Yahweh," "who sits at his right hand." Christianity inherited this tradition in the form of Sophia piety that also merged with Mariology in the Eastern Church.

But in ascetical Christianity this elevation of spiritual womanhood was done at the price of despising all real, living women, sex and fecundity, and the sublimation of the feminine into an ethereal love object for the sublimated sexual libido of the male ascetic. It should not surprise us, therefore, that Mariology has done little for the liberation of women, concretely and historically, when we realize to what extent it was created by and has always been the spirituality of male ascetics, serving as a substitute fantasized love object for a repressed male sexual libido, thereby guarding this from turning back to any real, physical expression of love with the dangerous daughters of Eve! Yet perhaps the task of Christians today is not merely to vilify the inhumanity of this tradition both to the affections of men and the natural somatic persons and full development of women. Rather we must realize how this ideology fits in with a strange but real struggle of mankind for transcendence of their given situation and the achievements of spiritual personhood, which seems to lie behind this aberrant fear of the body and its feelings. Without discarding these achievements, we today must

find out how to pour them back into a full-bodied sense of creation and incarnation, as male and female, who can begin to stand as personalized, autonomous selves and therefore as full persons for each other, not merely against the body, but in and through the body.²⁷

NOTES

1. See the article by Clara Maria Henning, "Canon Law and the Battle of the Sexes," in the *Images of Women in the Judaean-Christian tradition*, edited by Rosemary Ruether (Simon and Schuster, 1973).

2. See Rosemary Ruether, "Are Women's Colleges Obsolete," *Critic*, Oct.-Nov., (1968), pp. 58-64, for a summary of this struggle for women's education in America.

3. Origen's, *de Principiis* and Gregory Nyssa's *de opificio hominis*.

4. Augustine, *de grat. Ch. et pecc. orig.* 2,40; *de Genesi ad Lit.* 9,5.

5. Augustine's *Confessiones* 13,32; *de opere Monach.* 40.

6. Augustine, *de Trinitate* 7,7,10.

7. Tertullian, *de cultu fem.* 1,1.

8. Augustine, *de contin.* 1,23; *civitate Dei* 14,11; *de Genesi ad Lit.* 11,42.

9. Augustine, *Soliloquies* 1,10.

10. Augustine, *de sermone Dom. in Monte* 41.

11. Eg. Leander of Seville, *de instit. Virg.*; Ambrose, *de Cain et Abel* 1,4; Jerome, *Ep.* 130,17.

12. Tertullian, *de cultu fem.* 2,2.

13. Augustine, *civitate Dei* 14,26; *contra Julian* 3,13,27; *de grat. Ch. et pecc. orig.* 2,40.

14. Romans 8,23; Augustine, *civitate Dei* 14,24; *de grat. Ch. et pecc. orig.* 2,41; *de nupt. et concup.* 1,6-7,27,33.

15. Augustine, *de pecc. merit. et remiss.* 1,29; *de grat. Ch. et pecc. orig.* 1,27; 2,41-44; *de nupt. et concup.* 1,13,22; *adv. Julian*, 3,7; 5,14.

16. Jerome, *Ep.* 48,14; Augustine, *de nupt. et concup.* 1,16; *de bono conj.* 6,11.

17. Augustine, *de nupt. et concup.* 1,17; *de bono conj.* 10,11; *de conj. adult.* 2,12.

persons; sex is secondary.

The second chapter of Genesis contains another creation myth. According to the usual interpretation of this story, woman was made after man to be a helper for him. It is best not to be too literal in interpreting myths; but it cannot be maintained that woman is inferior even if she was created after man without admitting that man is inferior to the creeping things because he was created after them. Neither man nor woman in this story is said to be made "in God's image." Furthermore, the word translated as "help meet" or "helper" is the Hebrew word used of divine, or superior, help. The word never refers to inferior help in the Bible.

Probably the story, myth, most often quoted to justify keeping woman inferior to man is the story of the Fall when Eve (whose name, by the way, means "Life," or "Mother of all living") and Adam are still in the Garden of Eden. They have eaten of the forbidden fruit and God says to Eve, according to the modern translators of this story:

"I will increase your labour and your groaning, and in labour you shall bear children. You shall be eager for your husband, and he shall be your master." (Gen. 3:16)

The commentaries by the scholars on this passage are most interesting and very different from the common interpretation. Dean Simpson writes: "Most significant is the fact that [the writer] far in advance of his time sees that this domination of woman by man is an evil thing. The implication is that the relationship between husband and wife was intended by God to be a mutual and complementary relationship of love and respect, not a relationship in which one dominated the other."⁹

Professor Tribble writes: "This statement is not license for male supremacy, but rather it is condemnation of that very pattern."¹⁰

A literal translation of this passage from the Septuagint reads quite differently from our translations:

"Unto the woman [God] said, a snare hath increased thy sorrow and thy sighing; Thou art turning away [from God] to thy husband, and he will rule over thee."¹¹

In this translation it is very clear that woman is being warned against depending on her husband rather than on God.

Surely the scholars know that the translation in our Bible implies a false interpretation and that only a few people have access to their commentaries. Many an article and sermon has extolled "woman's place" as helper to her husband, not to mention statements justifying treating women as inferior persons and second-class citizens. I've never read an article or heard a sermon on the subject "Man is evil when he dominates woman," have you?

Half the human race, men, grow up with an exalted ego because God and humankind are always referred to by their identification, masculine pronouns, and woman is referred to as their "help meet." What violence these interpretations have done to both women and men.

Sometimes when I raise questions about the

interpretations of the old myths in the Bible or insist that women, as well as men, should be celebrated in liturgies, I am told: "Oh, don't bother with the past, let's get on with what needs to be done now." I want to explain why I think we must insist on re-reading and re-interpreting the myths and history without sexist blinders or there will be little real change for women. If an easily identifiable group within the culture is portrayed as inferior, as never having made any general contributions to society — that is, if their contributions are always thought of as within one very limited area (with women this would be within the biological sphere, giving birth and nurturing the family) — then that group of persons is thought of as "other" and the dominant group in the culture continues to hold them in an inferior, usually a servant, role. The oppressed group themselves accept the second-class, not-quite-human role because they know little or nothing about their past which would lead them to have any other opinion.

In the Judeo-Christian heritage the patriarchal culture has been so dominant, and still is, that women even though they have had a significant historical role are ignored, omitted, in history and the ritual celebrations. Thus their history is forgotten and without a past women are considered "other," not to be counted as full members of the community. A 20th century illustration of this is the way historians and social scientists continue to declare that Negroes got the vote after the Civil War and that all Americans have been equal under the law since the 14th Amendment became law in 1868. Black women as well as white women waited until 1920 to get the vote; and women are still trying to get the Equal Rights Amendment passed which will, at long last, include them.

The bias of scholars is very evident in the way they interpret biblical myths or history. As an example I quote from three Old Testament scholars writing about Adam and Eve eating the apple in the Garden of Eden.

First, comments from Dr. Gottfried Quell in a book entitled *Kittel's Bible Key Words*. Scholars in all parts of the world consider the articles in this book indispensable for a modern exposition of the truth of the Bible. In the section on Adam and Eve and their Fall, Dr. Quell describes the woman, Eve, as "naive," and says that she, Eve, is "already intrigued by the beauty of the forbidden fruit, listens like a fool to the words [of the serpent] about being clever, though she hardly understands them . . . and commits the act of disobedience." Dr. Quell attributes Adam's disobedience to his "passionate longing, shown in a thousand ways, to get knowledge and be clever . . ." Then, in a footnote, Dr. Quell quotes two other biblical scholars: one of whom suggests "the creation of woman may have been the result of a sin, i.e., an act of divine anger"; the other scholar calls the suggestion "fairly certain."¹²

Now, comments from Dr. Phyllis Tribble — try to remember that her comments are about the same people and the same story!

Why does the serpent speak to the woman and not to the man? . . . the woman is more appealing . . .

OVERCOMING

The Biblical and Traditional Subordination of Women

by Anne McGrew Bennett
(Radical Religion 1, no. 2)

excerpted, pp. 27-30)

In an ordination service for a woman which I attended recently, the official church representatives were men; the nouns and pronouns of the modern gospel songs were heavily masculine; when the prayer of Invocation began with the words "Mother-Father-God" there was an audible titter; in a charge to the soon-to-be-ordained woman that she give a central place to a prophetic ministry all the prophets, ancient and modern, who were held up as role models were men; the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith was read in unison — it is a short statement, but God is referred to in masculine pronouns twenty-one times; and, of course, humankind is referred to as "man," "men," "him" without comparable feminine words.

Why is it so easy, so "natural," to treat women as "other" — an "other" to exploit, or enjoy, or ignore with impunity?

Western culture, which is the dominant world culture today, has been largely molded by the Judeo-Christian faith. Therefore we must examine the religious myths and symbols and history which are the very fabric of our theology, of our worship and of our common life in order to begin to understand the root causes of discrimination which have given woman a certain "place" based on sex.

The most superficial examination of the Scriptures reveals that it comes out of a male-dominated society. Dr. Phyllis Trible, professor of Old Testament at Andover Newton Seminary, describes biblical religion in these words:

It is superfluous to document patriarchy in Scripture. Yahweh is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well as of Jesus and Paul. The legal codes of Israel treat women primarily as chattel. Qoheleth condemns her "whose heart is snares and nets and whose hands are fetters," concluding that although a few men may seek the meaning of existence, "a woman among all those I have not found." . . . Paul considers women subordinate to their husbands, and, even worse, I Timothy makes woman responsible for sin in the world. Considerable evidence indicts the Bible as a document of male supremacy. Attempts to acquit it by tokens such as Deborah, Huldah, Ruth, or Mary and Martha only reinforce the case.⁵

If these statements are all, or the essence, of what biblical religion means then women are in a very bad situation and have little hope of claiming whole personhood as long as the Judeo-Christian faith molds our understanding of God/man/woman.

There is another approach to the Bible. The Bible and biblical tradition can be re-read keeping in mind the patriarchal bias of the writers and redactors and interpreters in an effort to understand our biblical faith without sexist blinders.

Begin with the myth of the creation of humankind: "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:27) This verse has been interpreted quite differently for man than for woman. There is no question in the minds of men who follow the Judeo-Christian faith but that they are created in God's image with all the dignity and power that that means. As for women, it has been widely taught and believed that because they are not male they are an inferior creation.

Re-read the myth. Begin with the previous verse: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image and likeness.' . . ." (1:26) Notice that in this passage the writer does not have God say "Let us make man in my image," but "in our image." The Hebrew word for God in these passages is not *Yahweh* or *El*, which are masculine, singular nouns used to refer to God. The Hebrew word is *Elohim*. It is a plural word which is used in the Bible for a female or male God or Gods. The goddess of the Sidonians is referred to in the Bible as *Elohim*. It is always translated masculine, singular.⁶

Scholars — most of them male, of course — have a great deal of trouble with this word. Some of them try to ignore the plural and dismiss it as the plural of majesty. However, the late Old Testament scholar and Dean of Christ Church Oxford, Cuthbert A. Simpson, who is the exegete in *The Interpreter's Bible* for these particular passages in the creation story in which *Elohim* is used, suggests that there is "here an attempt . . . to give expression to the feeling that God could not be adequately represented as just a bare unity."⁷

There is another problem for us in this passage as we think about woman because of the use of the word "man": "God created man." The word "man" can be used in the generic sense and include woman. It is so used here. The Hebrew word in this passage is a generic term, not a male term.⁸ It should be translated "persons" or "humankind," not "man," which may mean "male" and always carries a male image.

How much difference would there be in our understanding of man/woman, woman's "place," if in the creation story the word *Elohim* were used throughout for the word "God" and the referent masculine pronouns; and if the generic term "persons" were used instead of "man"?

Elohim said, "Let us create persons in our image and likeness. . . ."

Elohim created persons in Elohim's own image; male and female Elohim created them.

(Gen. 1:26, 27)

This most ancient myth, in profound symbolism, describes God as inclusive being and all persons made in God's image. God's attributes are not limited and there are no inferior persons. Woman is portrayed the same as man. Both are

she is the more intelligent one ... the one with greater sensibilities ... She contemplates the tree, taking into account all the possibilities. The tree is good for food ... Above all, it is coveted as the source of wisdom ... The woman is fully aware when she acts, her vision encompassing the gamut of life. She takes the fruit and she eats. The initiative and the decision are hers alone. There is no consultation with her husband. She seeks neither his advice nor his permission. [Eve] acts independently. By contrast [Adam] is a silent, passive and bland recipient ... [Adam] does not theologize, he does not contemplate; he does not envision the full possibilities of the occasion. His one act is belly-oriented ... If the woman be intelligent, sensitive and ingenious, the man is passive, brutish, and inept ...¹³

Finally, comments from J. Edgar Bruns, director of the Institute of Christian Thought at St. Michael's College, Toronto. In a study of ancient mythologies Professor Bruns finds one theme dominant: "the equation of woman with intelligence and civilization." "In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve are forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a phrase that signifies all knowledge. The serpent ... tells Eve that if she and Adam eat of the tree they will become as gods and that is why the Lord has forbidden them to partake of its fruit. Eve is tempted, to the point of yielding, but why? Because she sees that 'the tree was desirable for the purpose of knowing' ... She is over-eager for wisdom and disobeys ..."¹⁴

Re-read the story and make up your own mind which scholar is closest to the actual character portrayals in the story. Notice when you read it that Eve admitted her guilt, but that Adam blamed God for his act. Notice also that the first great promise to humankind is to Eve: "her brood" will strike the serpent's head.

Re-read the Old Testament and the New Testament; search for the references to women; keep in mind the statement of the British historian J. H. Plumb: "The past is always a created ideology with a purpose, designed to control individuals, or motivate societies, or inspire classes. Nothing has been so corruptly used as concepts of the past ..." A past without women is a "created ideology."

Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel, whose husbands were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are most independent, fascinating women. Sarah's name means "ruler." We always hear about God's promise to Abraham — we are called the "children" of Abraham. Actually the promise of God was to Sarah. The promise was through Isaac, Sarah's son. Abraham already had a son. It is Sarah who is the Mother of nations. Even the name of the Jews, Israelites, comes not from Abraham but from Sarah. Her name has the same root as Israel.¹⁵ Abraham was Sarah's consort.

In an eight-volume work called *The Legends of the Jews*, a compilation of old Jewish traditions, there are many references to Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel. They are called the Matriarchs, the prophetesses, the Mothers. The *Legends* tell about the "cloud of light" representing God's presence which was over Sarah's tent and later over the tent of Rebekah; about the ceremonial gifts at the

dedication of the Tabernacle which honored the Mothers; there was no mention of any gifts honoring the Fathers. There is a listing of some twenty-two women called "women of valor" in the *Legends*.¹⁶

Re-read the Exodus story. Notice that it is the women who are the leaders in the revolution. It was the women who refused to obey the Pharaoh. The Hebrew midwives disobey. Pharaoh's own daughter and her maidens scheme with female slaves (Miriam and her mother) to adopt a Hebrew child whom she names Moses. If Pharaoh had realized the power of women he might have reversed his decree and had females killed rather than males. In the biblical story Miriam's role doesn't end when she was a young girl hiding her brother in the bulrushes. She was one of the leaders until her death. In the legends are stories that it was Miriam who taught the wandering Hebrews to dig for water, to till the ground, cultivate the tree; and that she restrained Moses from attacking and killing the people who lived in Canaan. Only after her death did the Hebrews make war against the tribes living in Canaan. Dr. Tribble points out that the Exodus story teaches that liberation is a refusal of the oppressed to participate in an unjust society and that liberation begins in the home of the oppressor. She says: "... a patriarchal religion which creates and preserves such feminist traditions which contains resources for overcoming patriarchy."¹⁷

Deborah, as reported in the Book of Judges, was a judge, chief of the tribes of Israel, commander in chief of the army, queen. But when you read the modern commentaries all of these roles are combined under the terms "a charismatic leader" or "prophetess." Why, in the 20th century, cannot the scholars report a woman's status as "head of state" correctly? Fortunately the story of Deborah has not been omitted from the Bible. It couldn't be, for the Song of Deborah is one of the oldest and most prized literary treasures of the Hebrew people.¹⁸

Huldah is another of our ancestors to celebrate. Huldah is the woman who was consulted when King Josiah heard about a book that had been found in the Temple and ordered the high priest to seek guidance from the Lord about the book's validity. In the biblical account, 2 Kings 22:11-14, the high priest and four high government officials went to Huldah the prophetess and consulted her. It is no wonder that most readers of the account pay little attention to her; she is identified as "... the wife of Shallum [who is] the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, the keeper of the wardrobe." And they consulted her "at home in the second quarter of Jerusalem." It is interesting to read in the *Legends* that she was the head of an academy in Jerusalem.¹⁹

The extreme male-centeredness of biblical writers, especially editors, is shown in the hundreds of incidents throughout the Hebrew Bible in which feminine words have been changed to masculine in order to express reverence for the Holy. Feminine words referring to sacred objects or having to do with worship have been changed to masculine. For example, the golden dishes on the altar, the bread, curtains, rings, doorposts,

candlesticks are feminine words but they have been changed to masculine. Even the milk cows that brought back the Ark are referred to as masculine six times! As one research scholar writes: "We may formulate the following principle: whenever someone or something attained an unusual or elevated status, whether temporary or permanent, the Scribes used masculine ... suffixes with reference to feminine words."²⁰

However, the Hebrew people never limited God's attributes to the masculine. There are many passages in the Old Testament which liken Yahweh's relationship to Israel as that of a mother caring for her children. More specifically God is described as being known and working in the world through *Shekinah*, which means the presence of God among the people, for example, in the cloud of light, burning bush, and in the Temple. God was in heaven, but *Shekinah* was God's presence on earth, according to the Jews. The word *Shekinah* is feminine gender. God is known through *Torah*, which means the guidance of God. The books of the law are *Torah*, but *Torah* is much more — *Torah* is the powerful "word" of God. This word is also of feminine gender. God is known and works through *Chokmah*, which means wisdom. Wisdom was thought of as pre-cosmic, involved in creation along with *Torah*. *Chokmah*, too, is a feminine word. These Hebrew words — *Shekinah*, *Torah*, *Cokmah* — reflecting the feminine attributes of God have never been changed into masculine gender, although biblical scholars will often use the pronoun "he" or "it" with them.²¹

Re-read the Gospels and examine the record of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Observe that Jesus nowhere distinguishes between men and women as children of God. On the contrary, he said and did things which indicated that he thought of women as the equal of men. In the male-centered Jewish world of his time, this was indeed revolutionary. The Gospels are filled with concrete examples of Jesus' feminist position — teaching women the meaning of the Scriptures, including women in the group who went with him through towns and villages preaching the Good News, using the experiences of both women and men in the parables.²²

The role of women in the church of early Christian times has become hidden history. Joan Morris, an English historian, has just published a book entitled *The Lady Was a Bishop* which documents the fact that women in the early church "held a place in the hierarchical service of the Church that is now denied to them." They were ordained with episcopal jurisdiction. Women were abbesses independent of bishops and monarchs. One abbess in the fourth century had jurisdiction over as many as thirty towns where she supervised the clergy who vowed obedience to her. From the 7th century until the Reformation there were twice as many nuns as monks. The Church Council in the 8th century was called by a woman, Empress Irene. Margaret of Scotland in the 11th century not only called a Synod but was the chief speaker.²³

The Reformation returned to a Hebrew and Old Testament evaluation of women which al-

lowed woman a position in the home but in subservience to her husband. In the witch craze of the 16th and 17th centuries women were the chief victims. The Protestant churches which were born in this era still bear scars of its anti-feminine sentiments. Neither Luther nor Calvin had a place for women as responsible religious colleagues.²⁴

I've emphasized the biblical heritage, especially the Old Testament, and church history because it is this heritage — the heavily male-dominated thought and structure — which still largely influences our language, images, thought patterns, our understanding of sexuality and personhood, our common life. Scientific knowledge, economic and political systems have changed, but we are a patriarchal culture now as then. This patriarchal culture, from primitive times to the present, has so manipulated religion as to provide a rationale, in the name of religion, for holding women in an inferior, submissive place. If religious sanction is given for holding down those you love, and who love you, is it any wonder that there are no limits to rationalizing violence toward, and exploitation of others?

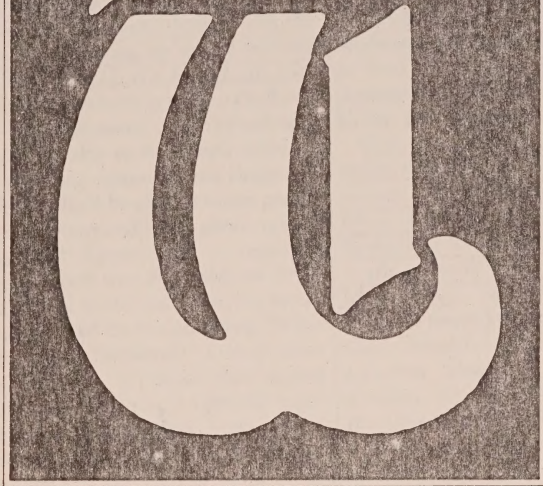
Women's liberation involves every facet of life and meaning. If — no, *when* it is admitted that over half of humankind, women, are considered and treated as not-quite-human and we look into the abyss which has resulted from our denial of God and creation, a long step will have been taken toward restoring wholeness to our understanding of God and persons, and full humanity to both oppressor and oppressed.

What is the role of the church and seminaries, and especially those persons in the field of Christian ethics, to expose the distortions of myth and history, to be advocate for fact and truth in the interpretation of history and myth, and to be activists in the struggle for whole personhood for all?

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who's afraid of



WOMEN PRIESTS?

BY MALCOLM BOYD



he ordination of 11 women to the Episcopal priesthood* set in motion new ideas and disturbing feelings. And it raised anew the question: what is priesthood?

Dictionaries define a priest as one who performs a sacrificial, mediatorial, interpretative, or ministerial function. Priests are people on whom special powers and rights have been conferred for the exercise of the ministry: they are divinely authorized to offer the eucharistic sacrifice. The gospel speaks to both personal needs and social justice, and a priest must so communicate its meaning.

New definitions and interpretations abound. For example:

Priesthood as an "area of artistry" is suggested by James Forest of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. "It is an

essential art, an ability to show the rest of us that strawberries and us and planet and spider's web and the invention of such words as love and mercy all have to do with—what phrase to use!—the Lord of the flowers, Yahweh, the presence we know as love, as the deep, fear-erasing appetite for justice, the capacity to forgive. It is an extraordinary art to break open the blindness we've inherited. To awaken hope, to give new depth and distance to imagination. To join us to past and possible. To make evident the essence of bread and wine, of water, of syllable, color, hunger, *(article continued on page 50)*

*The women, who range in age from 27 to 79, are: Rev. Merrill Bittner, Rev. Sister Alla Bozarth-Cambell, Rev. Alison Check, Rev. Emily Hewitt, Rev. Carter Heyward, Rev. Suzanne Hiatt, Rev. Marie Moorefield, Rev. Jeannette Piccard, Rev. Betty Bone Schiess, Rev. Katrina Swanson, and Rev. Nancy Constantine Hatch Wittig.

feast. A priest is a 'guide into essence.'"

My feeling is that a priest must be less and less a privileged member of an elite corps, more and more a brother/sister in an open community. Priesthood itself cannot be a cause of separation between people, but rather unity. So priesthood must be continuously validated in life, discovered anew in relationship with other people.

By any definition, however, implicit in priesthood—for 2,000 years—has been its maleness. The ordination of those 11 women to the priesthood is unprecedented—and threatening. Why threatening? Because we fear: (1) acknowledging and dealing with the female side of who we are, (2) facing up to and revering the female aspects of God, and (3) the loss of our own massive power. Yet each of these fears is really a challenge that must be met for the enrichment of the priesthood.

"We need women priests able to relate intimately instead of as remote 'counseling experts,'" one clergyman told me. "Women priests who'll be able to touch people and tell them 'you're important and I care about you.'"

But such a priesthood forces men to examine themselves in an altogether new way. Men who are afraid of the liturgical kiss of peace in the eucharist, for example, find themselves confronted by the question: "What is struggling inside me to be discovered?" One of these men honestly explained his fear: "If I should show feeling and emotion in public, and in church, if I should touch or embrace another man or a woman, what would happen to my self-respect? The image I like to project? What people think of me? I'm just not free to do it. I'm not free to be myself, to find out who I am as a person."

A young U.S. Navy ensign, taking the stereotypes for granted, assumes that women are always expressing emotion in public and that men would never do so: "If we had women in the Navy, could we maintain discipline

when a woman cried as an officer told her off? The same thing is true in church. If a woman priest broke down, and cried in front of a bishop who was reprimanding her, it would be unfair to all the male priests and would put the bishop in an impossible position. It just wouldn't work."

If we have real fears of discovering a female side within ourselves, seeing a female side to God is even more threatening.

Of course, the Jews were right from the very beginning when they refused to make graven images of God. This prevented the development of anthropomorphism that depicted God as male. In Christian art, including Michelangelo and Hollywood biblical films, the maleness of God has been strongly asserted. We've not seen a depiction of God that suggested Lillian Hellman or Helen Keller, Eleanor Roosevelt or Marian Anderson.

God is revealed in the Bible as progressively manifesting power, righteousness, and mercy. Yet the church has made it impossible for a serious view to be taken that God has female as well as male aspects. By demeaning women, the Church boxed itself in: seeing anything female in the deity would then have degraded or lessened God. "We need to get detached from traditional attitudes toward God and sex, so that we can think about God's femaleness without the feeling of terror that it's somehow obscene," says the Reverend Priscilla A. Chaplin, the third woman ordained to the ministry of the United Presbyterian Church.

Now we're seeing a female side of God and Christ that we have repressed for 2,000 years, finding evidence of it in various Gospel references. Jesus said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" (Matthew 23:37).

JEANNETTE PICCARD: SHE WAITED 50 YEARS

When Jeannette Piccard entered Bryn Mawr in the fall of 1914, she was asked by the college's president what she hoped to do after graduation. Jeannette replied, "Something impossible. I want to be a priest of the Episcopal Church."

"Found Women," Ms., January, 1973

By the time the Reverend Jeannette Piccard was called to Philadelphia last July to be ordained to the priesthood in defiance of Episcopal Church law, she was losing patience with her 50-year struggle. Deacon of St. Philip's Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, since 1971, she noticed that she was no longer being regarded as "a deacon who would become a priest. There was a distortion of the things I was supposed to be able to do. And parishioners were asking, 'Does the bishop let you do that?'"

The ceremony in Philadelphia—described by Jeannette Piccard as a "marvelous moment" during which she was more conscious of the holy spirit than in any other service she had attended—resulted in a request from Bishop Philip F. McNairy of Minnesota that she

refrain from exercising priestly functions. She decided to comply "for the time being." Her parishioners are very warm and accepting ("even though they haven't seen much of me lately—I'm so busy speaking at other churches"), but they have not openly opposed the bishop. Nevertheless, she has joined with several of the women who have been threatened with legal action by the bishops and parishes. (Contributions to the Women's Defense and Action Fund may be sent to: Church of the Advocate, 18th and Diamond Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19121.)

Whatever the outcome of the controversy, the 79-year-old Reverend Jeannette Piccard—who earned an M.S. in chemistry and a Ph.D. in education, and became a pioneer in aerospace exploration while pursuing her ultimate ambition—has no identity problem. "I am a priest," she says proudly. "The bishops can recognize me or not—but they can't do anything to invalidate the sacrament."

—Harriet Lyons

Jesus wept for Lazarus, he related easily to women as women; on the cross he was neither an angry man nor a stoic. His male and female aspects were manifested simultaneously both on the cross and in his ministry: he called upon people to repent, zealously overturned the tables of money changers in the temple, yet revealed the capacity to give and receive love.

"Through women priests, and those men who aren't uptight about shedding their masculine roles, we'll discover the female side of God," says the Reverend Nathaniel Pierce, a young Episcopal priest. "This will be a beautiful truth. Maybe the rediscovery of the female part of human and divine nature is the new force in the land."

Now we have a fresh opportunity to rediscover God in a wholeness and fullness that we sinfully and arrogantly denied ourselves for so long a time. We need to have our consciousness of God opened up to reality and be liberated from an absurd male chauvinism that wasn't content to stop with men—it had to reach out to include God. One result of that was the *macho* rejection of Jesus as real. He was considered too compassionate, too feeling, to be a real model for men. This led in turn to the widely accepted view that the church itself was for old ladies and children. Men merely ran it, paid for it, and made use of it at will as an institutional vehicle of Establishment power. (A highly interesting corollary of this *macho* mentality has been the church's official attitudes toward such questions as war and amnesty. The church tended to support the former and express leery questions about the latter.)

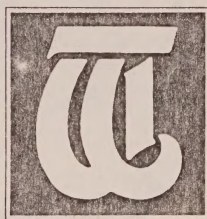
Because the priesthood, a masculine holy of holies and the most impregnable of male preserves in history, will open up vast new areas of human anxiety and psychological pitfalls for men when it becomes sexually integrated, the first woman bishop or the first woman cardinal will drive some men up the hierarchy walls. But by narrowly limiting the priesthood to men, and seeing God anthropomorphically solely in maleness, the church both denied God and came close to committing institutional suicide.

It is well-nigh universally acknowledged that the efficacy of a sacrament is not affected by the character of a priest-celebrant. Yet a number of critics of women in the priesthood have at least suggested that the efficacy of a sacrament may somehow be affected by the priest's gender. The idea of receiving the Host from the hand of a woman apparently confronts them with grave difficulties. The matter of kneeling down before a woman to receive the sacramental Body of Christ is laced with ambiguities for a number of male critics, whose opposition up to this point has been admittedly jejune. Could this stem from the life experience of praying "Now I lay me down to sleep," and later "Our Father who art in heaven," while one was mentally on one's knees before a male God? Certainly the male priest before whom one knelt in church to receive Holy Communion was a surrogate figure of that same bearded and patriarchal God.

Women, too, are victims of this indoctrination. One, after seeing the ordination on TV, said: "Women priests

are disgusting. One of them cried, Priests shouldn't cry. I wouldn't let one of them inside my front door if she came to call."

Yet Christian baptism does mean complete, not partial, church membership. Any kind of churchly caste system is on the shakiest theological ground. A baptized Christian—female, male, white, black, gay, Chicano, Japanese, Native American—is equal to any other baptized Christian as a member of the Body of Christ. Period. Digression from this truth is heresy, and so help us God, the church itself carries on heresy, in the very name of God. Even children—of both sexes—are vic-



WHEN THE PRIEST IS A WOMAN, EVEN GOD IS NO LONGER A MALE.

timized by sexual segregation of acolytes at the altar; for these are almost inevitably boys. The church cannot speak effectively to society, and especially its youth, as long as it maintains a caste system and denies the meaning of both baptism and civil rights to anyone. That's what drives millions of people away, while an outmoded and unloving institution spends millions of dollars on "evangelism" designed to bring people into its tired ranks. The institutional church often seems like a medieval pope, clothed in furs and hanging with jewels, trying to make up the princely mind whether or not to turn the next dismaying corner into the preceding century.

The meaning of baptism, coupled with the realities of civil rights, will inevitably settle the question of women's ordination on the side of women. Changing minds and hearts will take a while—it might not happen until people experience God through a human being whose female side is dominant. But to storm the walls of the priesthood is a revolution in the relations between the sexes. For when a priest is a woman, even God is no longer a male. Then we must really see that our rigid sex roles are to be discarded, for we are persons with acceptably different parts of our natures—and we are free even as God is free.

Malcolm Boyd is an Episcopal priest, a social critic, and a bestselling author. His new book, "The Alleluia Affair," will be published by Word Books early in 1975.

"I'm a priest, not a priestess," says Carter Heyward, 28 (see cover), one of the 11 women who defied Episcopal Church law and tradition last July 29, by being ordained to the priesthood.

"Priestess" implies mumbo jumbo and all sorts of pagan goings-on. Those who oppose us would love to call us priestesses. They can call us all the names in the world—it's better than being invisible."

But in church, being a visible woman has its hazards. Last January, when Carter assisted at a communion service at Riverside Church in Manhattan, a young priest sipped wine from the chalice she was holding and then dug his fingernails into her hand. "When I started to bleed, he said, 'I hope you burn in hell!'" She was badly shaken. Only later, when her parents urged her to get rabies shots, was she able to see the humor of it all.

The incident didn't surprise Carter. "Part of the church has always considered women depraved and sometimes we forget that that's still going on. You should have seen the hatred and fear and sickness in that man's face—and he wasn't just an isolated crazy. The church does attract men who can't deal with women. It's the last refuge for them—where else can they go with such a profoundly misogynist attitude?"

She points to a dreary tedium of misogyny running through all of church history, to an early church blatant in its condemnation of women, to the book of Leviticus, which proclaims women not only unclean after childbirth, but unclean twice as long after the delivery of a girl.

"Even now," she says, "the church holds on to deep-seated, almost magical taboos against women. Why else would priests tell me that it would be gross if a woman who is menstruating were to celebrate communion, and how could a pregnant woman dare stand at the altar? Deep down, it's still assumed that there's something really dirty about menstrual blood, about pregnancy, something inherently evil in women." During the ordination, one of the priests protesting against it, the Reverend George Rutler, proclaimed that women could never be priests, because they could only "offer up the smell and the sound and the sight of perversion."

"That's sick, sick, and it's heresy," says Carter. "It's based on the 'maleness of Christ as essential to the priest-



CARTER HEYWARD:
SHE GAVE COMMUNION
AND GOT A SCRATCH
ON THE HAND

hood' argument, pushed to its logical extreme. I've had priests talk to me about a seminal mass, where the priest, as the living representative of Christ, engages in a sex act with the 'bride of Christ,' the church. A woman can't provide the semen; she commits a lesbian act instead. That's what Rutler is talking about, and what some priests worried about during the last convention — 'cosmic lesbianism.' It's the most absurd thing I ever heard. I resent it as a put-down of women and of gays, and as sick, foundationless theology. Wherever did they get the idea that there's a sex act of any kind going on; since when isn't the priest just as much a part of the church, of the 'bride,' as anyone else? Fortunately, most lay people find this idea so appalling, that when priests actually come out and talk in this way, we win more friends than we lose."

The House of Bishops claims to have dealt with the women exactly as if they had been men, by invalidating the ordination on legal grounds. "We're caught in the system," Carter protests. She explains that the women were barred from going through regular channels, simply because they were women. "That's catch-22. If ever there was a bunch of people qualified for ordination, it's us. If we were men, we'd have been ordained a year ago, three years ago, fifty years ago. All we lacked was male anatomical appendages."

Carter insists that the bishops are refusing to face the issue at hand. "I'd much rather have a bishop say to me, 'Look, I just can't hack this; I get upset at the idea of a woman priest.' But when they spout off about how our ordination is strictly a law-and-order issue, that's poppycock. It's clearly a women's issue. If the bishops don't even realize that, it just says to me they're out to lunch when it comes to women."

Carter, a doctoral candidate and tutor in practical theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York, wanted to be a priest when she was six years old. By the age of 11, she had put that goal out of her mind: "You just don't think seriously about the impossible." She decided to teach religion. "Only after my first year in seminary," she says, "did I get back in touch with that basic sense of call I'd had as a little girl."

It was also in seminary that she first read Kate Millet's book, *Sexual Politics*. "It scared (continued on page 76)

GIFTS FOR FREE CHILDREN
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 68

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DR. CHARLES WILLIE
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"Years ago," Willie continues, "I came to the conclusion that, for racism to end, whites were going to have to suffer the redemption of blacks from their oppression. Whites recognize that blacks do not start from the same starting line, but they are unwilling to sacrifice. . . . They say that blacks should have all the opportunities whites have, but no more. . . . And here I was, in the role of being able to sacrifice, as a male."

When Dr. Willie got home, he shared these thoughts with his family. His wife, Mary Sue, told him that to make an impact, he should announce his resignation publicly. So he notified the press of his decision, and on the following Sunday at Grace Church in Syracuse, he delivered a sermon, "The Sin Sexism"—in which he resigned from both his church positions: "If being an officer in the church means one remains silent about oppression, then I must sacrifice that honor. And if, as a result of my sacrifice, we overcome oppression, what a better society we have!"

—Honor Moore

CARTER HEYWARD
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—Ingeborg Day

When headlines screamed, last July 30, that 11 women had been "illegally" ordained priests in the Episcopal Church, I shouted a spontaneous "Right on!" I am the oldest daughter of an Episcopal bishop, and the first perception of my inequality was inserted in my cortex by the realization that priests were always men. My early observation that the holy sacraments could be performed only by men did much to add to my suspicion that my sex was dirty. I ceased, at 18, going to church regularly, and if I ever had a religious vocation, it has long been buried. What I didn't realize until the morning I saw those headlines was that I might have, had it been possible, followed my father into the priesthood.

Ironically, I visited my father (last August) the day after he returned from Chicago. He was devastated by what he'd seen and heard at the House of Bishops (roughly equivalent to the Senate). He had been one of the tiny minority to vote against the resolution that invalidated the ordination of the 11 women priests. At breakfast the next morning I read that Dr. Charles Willie, the top-ranking lay person (nonclergy) in the Episcopal Church, had resigned to protest the exclusion of women from the priesthood. I read aloud his dramatic statement:

And so I must remove myself from the leadership structure of the Episcopal Church as a protest against the inhumane treatment of women, especially the 11 women priests. To carry out the unjust laws of this church which do not affirm the right of females to be priests and bishops is to visit oppression upon women.

I realized the extent of Willie's courage when my father replied that Willie would, most probably, have been the first black man to be elected president of the House of Deputies (equivalent to the House of Representatives), at the Church's next convention, in 1976.

I found the Willie family just out of packing boxes in their new home in Concord, Massachusetts, where Dr. Willie was beginning a professorship at Harvard Graduate School of Education. Seconds after I spotted Martin Willie, the youngest of the three children, through a window, Dr. Willie appeared at the door. He is a big man, six robust feet, who radiates great warmth. An urban sociologist, he has, since 1966, written five books and edited two, most about racism. For eight years he has



DR. CHARLES WILLIE:
HE RESIGNED A
PRESTIGIOUS POST
IN SUPPORT

been on the Episcopal Church's Executive Council and in 1973 was elected vice-president of its House of Deputies. Both are unsalaried but prestigious jobs.

The saga of Dr. Willie and the movement for women's ordination within the Episcopal Church began only last June when he was asked to preach a guest sermon at St. Mark's Church in Syracuse, New York.

He describes the events as if he felt that some power greater than himself were in control of them. Dr. Willie's sermon called upon the congregation to consider the three oppressions within the Church and in their diocese: first, the oppression

of young people, who are denied full decision-making powers; second, racism—there are no black priests in the Diocese of Central New York; and, third, he called upon the Bishop of Central New York to fight sexism by ordaining the woman deacon in his diocese, Betty Bone Schiess, to the priesthood.

Unbeknown to Willie, in that same month, June, a similar sermon was delivered in Philadelphia by Edward Harris, co-dean of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge; he called for the immediate ordination of women priests. In the kitchen afterward, Sue Hiatt, a woman deacon, decided she had waited long enough, that the time for women's ordination was now. She called a planning meeting for July 10. "Her act was crucial," Willie says. "I am convinced that political action succeeds only when those who are oppressed decide for themselves they can no longer take it."

Betty Bone Schiess attended the July 10 meeting, Willie's sermon in hand, and she and the other women deacons decided that they wanted him to preach at their ordination to the priesthood. "All I could answer," Willie says, "was 'Yup' . . . when you're fighting oppression, the time is now. If I had refused, I could not counsel my kids about courage."

Willie preached at the ordination and two weeks later got another call: this time he was invited to be there when the women priests presented their response to the emergency session of the House of Bishops—in Chicago. He hesitated but then realized, "This was a movement. And in movements you do what you're told."

In Chicago, he was confronted by what he calls "blatant male arrogance" and an (continued on page 76)

GIFTS FOR FREE CHILDREN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 68

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Women in Ministry

Challenge/Response

OUR CHALLENGE

What is a woman? She is soft, strong, happy, sad, rational irrational, doctor, mechanic, lawyer, homemaker, engineer, educator, truck driver, clergy.

Books, magazines, newspapers; radio, television programs and commercials; our relationships at work, our family lives, our institutions--all reflect the message that the perceptions of who women are and what they can do are expanding.

The challenge for the churches is to be contributors and shapers in this expanding vision of what it means to be a woman in our society. This vision involves theological understandings, economic equality, career opportunities and life style choices.

The question is "How can we respond to this challenge?"

OUR RESPONSE

Commitment--make a commitment to expanding the vision of what it means to be a woman in our society that is:

Theological: *When people use Scriptures to "keep women in their place" it is crucial to study how Christ related to women.*
-a pastor

A commitment is theological when it actively reflects on the Gospel application to the contemporary situation.

Visible: *"During my job interview, I stated my commitment to the recruitment and employment of women at all places in the church. I do not want my commitment to be a mystery to women or a surprise to search committees."*
-a denominational leader

A commitment is visible when it is articulated in the committee meetings, staff meetings, public forums, discussions, policy statements and procedures, etc.

Active: *"I implement our commitment to the recruitment and employment of women by allocating resources and funds to affirmative action programs and by recognizing people who participate in those programs."*
-a church executive

A commitment is active when there is sufficient money, competent staff, relevant resources, reliable administrative support and open policies.

Persistent: *"The search committee developed a variety of ways for 'handling women'. One method was to touch lightly on her skills and experience and to make the interview more demanding than ordination examinations. I finally confronted the other committee members. There was one resignation and many discussions but we were able to conduct more equitable interviews."*
-a committee member

A commitment is persistent when overt and covert stumbling blocks are consistently confronted, circumvented, compromised and/or conciliated.

Supportive: *"I had a 'meet the candidate [a woman] lunch'. Included with my invitation was a letter indicating my excitement and endorsement plus a brief profile. I also stated that I could be called collect at home on one particular evening to discuss any fears they had about hiring a woman. I also shared with the candidate what obstacles she might face. I have continued to be an advocate for the women we hired."*
-a regional head of staff

A commitment is supportive when there are actions that deal with the emotional needs of all the people involved.

Prepared by Penelope Morgan Colman, Associate Women in Ministry
For further information, write:
Commission on the Ministry
American Baptist Churches
Valley Forge, Pa. 19481

Division of Professional Development
Women in Church Professions
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.
341 Ponce de Leon Avenue, N.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30308

Office of Personnel
Board of Higher Education and Ministry
United Methodist Church
Box 871
Nashville, Tn. 37202

The Vocation Agency
Women in Ministry
The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
475 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 10027

Selected references:

'This ain't the Kingdom,' but it's changing

By Susan Quinn

Photos: Ed Fitzgerald



Rev. Elsa Warberg, above and at right, was ordained at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Wellesley; below, Carter Heyward (left) and Sue Hiatt, members of the defiant "Philadelphia 11" who are now at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge.



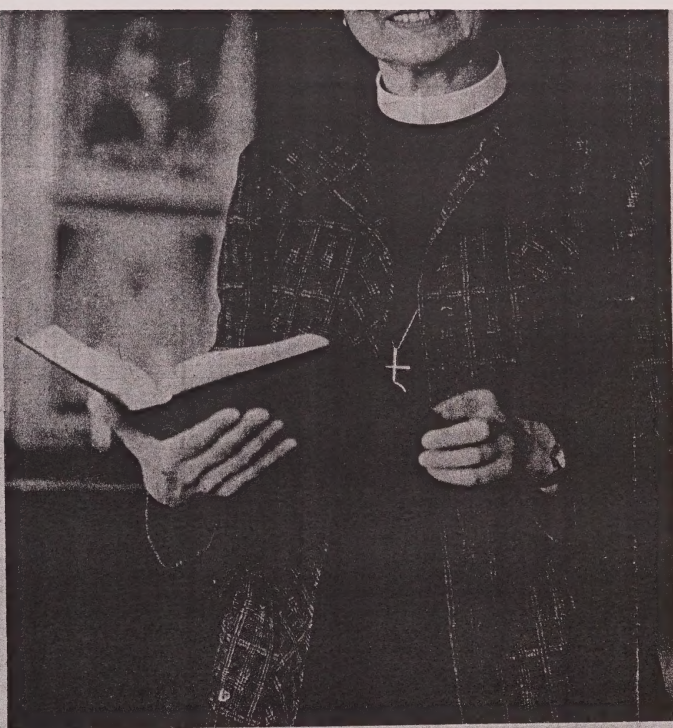
Fifteen years ago, when Sue Hiatt was a student at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge and knew she couldn't become a priest because she was a woman, she confronted her adviser with a quote from Paul in the New Testament. In the Kingdom, she pointed out, there is "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female." Her adviser looked at her and said, "This ain't the Kingdom."

Thirteen years later, in the summer of 1974, that adviser was one of about 100 priests who participated in the ordination of Sue Hiatt and 10 other women at an historic confrontation with church authorities at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. As always in Episcopal ordinations, the focal point of the ceremony was the laying on of hands, the moment when the officiating priest completes the rite of ordination by laying his hand on the head of the candidates. In Philadelphia, this moment was orchestrated by the flashing of camera bulbs and the whirl of TV cameras. And the hands of the priests, who had come to support the women's act of defiance, stretched in a chain all the way from the heads of the ordinands to the back of the huge inner city cathedral.

The impact of the event stretched much farther. Overnight, the Episcopal Church's internal debate over whether to ordain women became public knowledge to every newspaper reader and TV viewer. At first, the Episcopal bishops reacted by condemning the ordinations. But by the summer of 1976, when the



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mer of 1974, that adviser was one of about 100 priests who participated in the ordination of Sue Hiatt and 10 other women at an historic confrontation with church authorities at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. As always in Episcopal ordinations, the focal point of the ceremony was the laying on of hands, the moment when the officiating priest completes the rite of ordination by laying his hand on the head of the candidates. In Philadelphia, this moment was orchestrated by the flashing of camera bulbs and the whir of TV cameras. And the hands of the priests, who had come to support the women's act of defiance, stretched in a chain all the way from the heads of the ordinands to the back of the huge inner city cathedral.

The impact of the event stretched much farther. Overnight, the Episcopal Church's internal debate over whether to ordain women became public knowledge to every newspaper reader and TV viewer. At first, the Episcopal bishops reacted by condemning the ordinations. But by the summer of 1976, when the Episcopal Church had its tri-annual convention in Minneapolis, it had become clear to the church leadership that the "Philadelphia 11" and the "Washington four," who followed their examples later, were only the first of growing numbers of Episcopal women who would be willing, in the future, to seek ordination in defiance of church authorities. "The deputies sensed," as one priest put it, "that all hell was going to break loose." As a result, they approved the ordination of women, effective January 1 of this year. Since then, about 45 more women have been ordained to the Episcopal priesthood, and the "irregular" ordinations which went before are being officially recognized.

With its decision last summer, the Episcopal Church became the last of the major Protestant denomina-

turn to page 34

Susan Quinn is a freelance writer living in Brookline.

Women from page 32

tions to open the door to women in the ordained ministry. Since Judaism, at least in the Reform branch, has begun in the seventies to ordain small numbers of women rabbis, the Catholic Church remains the only major religious body in the United States which excludes women from ordination and denies them the central sacramental role in religious celebration.

The Vatican indirectly acknowledged this fact recently when it issued a statement referring to recent events in Protestantism and reiterating its position that women cannot become priests. The Episcopal experience undoubtedly increased the pressure on the Catholic Church to address the issue of women priests. But there have been concurrent pressures from lay Catholic groups in the United States as well. And some within the church feel that the Vatican statement was hastened by pressure from the US church hierarchy. "It was not the great out-of-it Roman curia saying something on their own," says Sister Mary Hennessey, director of the ecumenical Boston Theological Institute. "They were being pushed to say something by the nervous prelates in the United States, and I think the very fact that they pushed shows how much is going on."

The Vatican statement, which was issued on January 27, 1977, argued that because Christ was a man, and because the priest acts in place of Christ, it would be unnatural for a woman to perform the priest's sacramental role. "In such a case," the document states, "it would be difficult to see in a minister the image of Christ. For Christ himself was and remains a man." This is an old argument, used to oppose the ordination of women in the Episcopal Church, and it has been disputed before. Dr. Mary Daly, a theologian at Boston College who has written extensively on women in the church, wrote nine years ago in "The Church and the Second Sex" that such an argument "betrays a distorted understanding of the meaning of Christ, giving prime importance to his maleness rather than to his humanity." However, as John Crocker, Episcopal chaplain at MIT observed, "This is all cultural stuff, not theological stuff."

Crocker, and others I talked with, agreed that it

was only a matter of time before the Catholic Church begins ordaining women to the priesthood. How long it will take, and whether it will require some kind of dramatic acts of defiance like those of the Episcopal women, is an open question. A few Catholic schools of theology, like Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, have already, by admitting women to their degree programs, set in motion a process which will produce women trained and ready to assume the role of priest. If the Episcopal experience is any indication, these women will be the cutting edge of the push toward ordination. But, also judging from the Episcopal experience, some opponents of female ordinations will profess sympathy but argue that the time is not ripe. Among the Episcopal women now being ordained, there are some, like Elsa Walberg, who have heard this argument for years.

On Feb. 19, Elsa Walberg was ordained, at the age of 51, to the priesthood at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Wellesley. The announcement of her ordination, which she designed herself, opens with a line from Psalms which is an appropriate summation of her long struggle toward the priesthood: "Weeping may spend the night, but joy comes in the morning." For Elsa Walberg, the morning of ordination has been a long time in coming.

A devout child who grew up in Brooklyn in a Lutheran family, Elsa Walberg had become disenchanted with the narrowness of the parish leadership in her teens. She remembers being told in Sunday school that the children were "noisier than the Jews in the synagogue down the street." Much later, in her early thirties, while teaching at a private girls' school in Connecticut, she began attending the local Episcopal church and found "the faith that I had taken into my pores as a little child, I was now getting together with my head." When her rector told her that his alma mater, the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, had begun admitting women to the degree program, she decided, despite her teaching career and master's degree, to enroll.

She was one of two women in the class, and the only one who admitted her desire to become a priest. As a senior, she chose, unlike

3

the other woman student, to lead worship for a week. "A large number of my brothers," she says, "were not in chapel that week because it was an outrage to them." In 1962, Walberg graduated second in her class. But after graduation, most of the job offers were for a "director of Christian education," a traditionally female role. She chose a fulltime job at Trinity Episcopal Church in Melrose as "parish assistant, a term chosen by me because nobody knew what that was, including me." Nonetheless, she found she was often introduced as "our director of Christian education." She served at Trinity Melrose for 11 years, performing all but the sacramental functions of a priest. "After a while, people would say, 'Why can't you bring me the communion?' or 'Why can't you baptize our first child?' or 'Why can't you marry us?' They asked the question and I began to say 'Why can't I?' I knew why. But it became a pressure that helped develop my consciousness."

"In 1963," she says, "had I been male, I would have been ordained and would have served as a parish priest since then. Instead I served 11 years as a lay minister. When I started my work in 1962, I even tried to prove that ordination is irrelevant. I learned, the hard way, that it is not. The minute you're ordained you have a new sense of who you are and so do other people. And economically the situation is different." After working in Melrose for eight years, Walberg was earning \$2000 less than a young ordained man who had been on the staff for eight months. The parish, in an effort to right the inequity, raised her salary by \$1000. But she was still not earning as much as the less experienced priest. Her unordained status also meant that she had less job security than the principal ordained pastor. After 11 years, the Melrose parish was economically pinched and Elsa Walberg lost her job. For two years after that, she was unemployed and pieced together a living as a freelance minister, travelling around New England in her Volkswagen to preach in more than 90 parishes in the diocese.

"My whole identity, not being a wife or mother, was in fact that of parish priest." As a result of losing her job, she learned that "you must never make anything you do your whole life." Recently, in

addition to a part-time job ministering to the elderly in Brookline, she has cultivated her art, calligraphy, and sewing and has returned to an earlier interest, fencing. But her ordination on Feb. 19 was a double triumph, because it meant she was not only a priest but once again a pastor in the local Wellesley church.

Elsa Walberg, while fully supporting the ordination of the "Philadelphia 11," chose to wait for local ordination supported by "the people that I served, especially during those 11 years in Melrose. I couldn't imagine going somewhere else to hear other people say 'She is worthy.'" Also, she says, she felt participation in the Philadelphia ordination would result in her being "effectively stripped of my ability to serve in this diocese. I was not willing to pay the price. I'm also someone," she adds, "who does not handle anger well. I like to be approved of. If you don't handle anger well, you shouldn't get yourself in a situation where you're going to get a lot of it."

Carter Heyward and Sue Hiatt are two women who chose to pay the price. After their defiant ordination in Philadelphia, they were hired to share a teaching position at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge. Their hiring was in keeping with the school's maverick tradition, but it resulted in some bishops' withdrawing students from the school and in a loss of contributions from some alumni and wealthy benefactors.

Because they were hired together, live together at the seminary, and are associated with the now famous Philadelphia ordination, Carter Heyward and Sue Hiatt find they are often lumped together at the school. Carter is sometimes called Sue, and Sue is called Carter. But, in fact, they are two very different personalities. Sue Hiatt is soft-spoken and deliberate; because of her leadership role in the push toward female ordination, she was sometimes referred to as the "bishop" by other women involved. Carter is somewhat younger and more visibly emotional.

The contrast is apparent in the way they remember the historic ordination in Philadelphia. Sue Hiatt, at whose church the ordination took place, remembers worrying about possible violence. At

turn to page 38

one moment, when the women were kneeling with their backs to the packed assembly, she heard shouts that sounded like "blasphemy, blasphemy" but turned out to be a row between a photographer and an usher. Carter Heyward remembers, "I don't think ever before or since have I been so absolutely elated. I didn't feel I was floating in the clouds. It had a sense of reality to it, but it was a real experience that something very right was happening."

For both Heyward and Hiatt, the ordination was the culmination of years of struggle. Heyward had fantasies of becoming an Episcopal priest as a little girl, growing up in North Carolina. "I was also wanting to be Superman," she adds, "and all kinds of things that were probably equally realistic at that point." In high school, she was the president of her church youth group and then the first female president to the North Carolina diocesan youth commission. She remembers, even then, a tangle with the bishops over segregation. A black youth was on the commission for the first time that year, and the commission was barred from use of the segregated church camp as a result. The experience, she says, "brought me face to face with the reality of injustice in the church." The youth commission met elsewhere, but the camp was integrated within a year.

After college, Heyward attended seminary and experienced "an identity crisis of the first order." She was placed, with male seminary students, in a church in the Bronx, and discovered that, unlike the males, she was expected to work with the children. "I've never had a thing against working with children," she says, "but the deep problems and contradictions of the whole thing began to open up. It was like a wound finally being opened." She left seminary, returned to work in her local parish in Carolina, and fell in love with a young priest she met there. "I really lost my identity in his. I had fallen in love with something I could only see in him. I was very much wrapped up in his being a priest." For a time, it seemed that Heyward might follow in the path of many ministers' wives and marry her vocation. But the male priest was opposed to women's ordination and ex-

pected her to be a traditional wife. In time she began to ask, "What about me and my vocation?" Ultimately she returned to seminary, and became involved in therapy, a consciousness-raising group and applying to the diaconate (the deacon's role, which is the step to priesthood, was opened to Episcopal women in 1970). "I could feel myself becoming a stronger person, and very much aware, as of about 1971, 1972, that I was willing to fight this thing to the death if need be. Once your eyes are opened to the difference that gender really has made, there is really no turning back."

Sue Hiatt feels she has been a feminist without a movement since the '50s and remembers, in high school civics, writing a paper on the issue which caused her female teacher to draw her aside and suggest she had "lost my sense of humor about this." Like Elsa Walberg, she was an early graduate, with honors, from the Episcopal Divinity School who spent years in church-related work, organizing in the welfare rights movement, the peace movement, and the women's movement. She also has a social degree, which she got "in order to be independent enough of the church so that I could call my own shots." She spoke openly, even while in theology school, of wanting to become a priest. After the conventions of 1970 and 1973 voted down ordination, Sue Hiatt began to see a 25-year fight ahead. "Most deputies didn't care one way or the other, but they figured it would be more trouble to ordain women than not to ordain them. They had counted on the women waiting forever. Here were Elsa and I, who'd already waited 10 years. It was quite obvious we'd wait another 10, giving them a lot of faithful service at low salaries." The Philadelphia ordination was intended, Hiatt explains, "to make it more trouble not to ordain women than to ordain them."



The acceptance of women priests in the Episcopal Church is still far from universal. Thirty-eight bishops, some of whose dioceses cover entire states, continue to refuse to hire women priests. One of the "Philadelphia 11," Katrina Swanson, is still being denied recognition by her bishop.

Some priests and parishioners have left the Episcopal

5

Church in protest against the ordination of women and other liberal trends, including the recent ordination of an avowed lesbian in New York City. In the Boston area, the congregation of Trinity Church in Bridgewater voted recently to withdraw from the Episcopal Church. Rev. Freedom Wentworth 2d, pastor of Trinity, criticized the Episcopal leadership for accepting "change for the sake of change." While he says he believes in equality for women, he is opposed to their ordination and also opposed to the acceptance of homosexuals as church leaders.

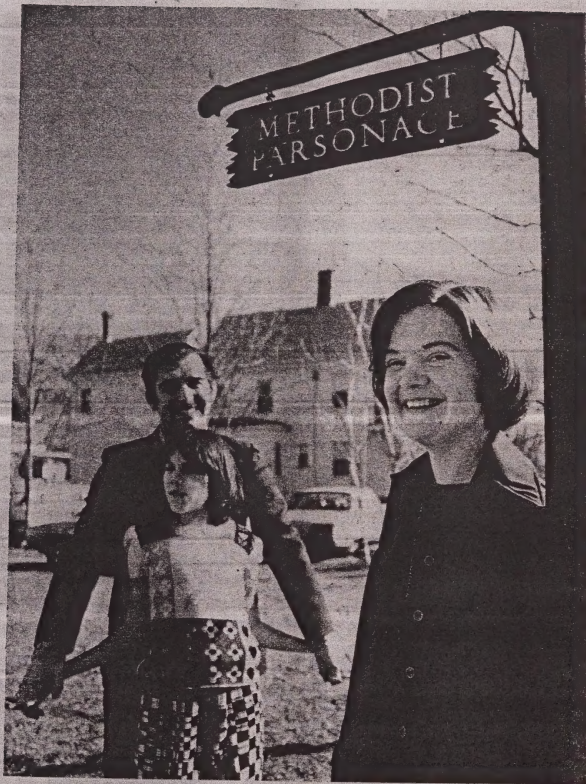
But Sue Hiatt and Carter Heyward are finding, as teachers at E.D.S., that many of the new women students, whose numbers have swelled to almost half the total enrollment of 150 students as a result of the acceptance of women priests, now feel the turn to page 40



Rev. Julie Hullman is a pastor in Bridgewater; her husband has a church in Brockton.

Two great new Soup for One flavors from Campbell
(try 'em and save 10¢)

Great new Full Flavored



Rev. Harry Hullman, Rev. Julie Hullman, and daughter Debbie, 12, outside Bridgewater parsonage.

Women from page 39

issue is resolved. But, in fact, as they and others are pointing out, the subordinate role of women doesn't end with equal access to ordination.

The ordination of the Philadelphia 11 was only the most visible sign of a dramatic new influx of women into the ministry. Among members of the Boston Theological Institute, a consortium of nine theological schools of varying denominations in the Boston area, the female enrollment has increased 450 percent in the past four years. The total current enrollment is 2000, of whom more than 500 are women.

Because the job market is tight, many of these students, male and female, will face difficulties finding jobs in ministry after graduation. Barbara Wheeler, director of the Woman's Theological Coalition of the B.T.I., observes that the tendency in the '60s was "to get your divinity degree and run into secular agencies in which you carried out ministry in the cities or addressed national issues." But, in the '70s, there has been a renewed interest in the local church. That

means that the job of local parish priest has become more desirable. But even in denominations which have long ordained women, the job of principal pastor has tended to go to men, except in rural areas. "It is extremely hard," observes Connie Parvey, an ordained minister at University Lutheran Church in Cambridge, "for a woman to become the senior member of a parish."

"It is hard for men to put that much trust in a woman, and it's probably even harder for women to put that much trust in another woman. Over and over, I see jobs being given to men who really are not as qualified as women, because we expect them to do it." Women have tended to work as part of team ministries and in certain roles, such as director of Christian education. Some have worked part-time, which may be desirable for married women with small children but which also tends to put women in the category of cheap labor. Some, because of the scarcity of jobs, are dividing their time between several parishes. And some have to freelance from church to church. Even with

ordination, most women discover sooner or later that gender still matters in the ministry.

"The difficulty," observes Carter Heyward, "is to maintain a sense of real sisterhood, because women themselves will say there's really no problem. Until they find themselves out in Podunk, getting crunched by a parish or a bishop and they don't know who their sisters are."

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Julie Ann Hullman is a 33-year-old Methodist minister who came late to the realization that being a woman in the ministry made a difference. She was encouraged by a boyfriend in college to go to seminary and, once in seminary, she met and married a man who also planned to be a minister. "The women's movement," she says now, "was the wind that swept me in the back of the legs. All I knew was that I felt called to pursue the ministry." She had been raised a Lutheran, but the Lutheran Church was not yet ordaining women. With her husband's encouragement, she turned to the Methodist Church, which has accepted women

turn to page 43

6

Women from page 40

for ordination since 1954. For five years, she and her husband ministered as a team in Bridgewater. Along the way, they have been raising one natural and five adopted children.

This year, Julie Hullman and her husband Harry split up their team ministry. He moved on to a church in Brockton, and she remained the principal and only pastor of the Gammons Memorial United Methodist Church, a 102-year-old stone church on a corner in Bridgewater.

The decision to separate, as ministers, grew out of "the necessity for me to experience myself as a single pastor." As part of a team, she had tended to do the pastoral work and her husband the administrative work. "Our roles were becoming boxed in. It was necessary to experience myself apart from him." The same, she adds, was true for her husband. But as a pastor alone she not only finds she must "take on more of the administrative responsibilities and feel the frustrations," but also that she is confronting "issues related to being a woman in the ministry."

"There were ways in which I was emotionally tied to Harry, that I didn't experience the confrontation with the realities of sexism." She finds that women are sometimes rivalrous, that men sometimes coddle her and are overly concerned that she succeed, or see her ministry as a test case rather than a cooperative venture. But she believes women's approach to ministry will ultimately change the church. "The traditional male model is that one does have the answers," she says, "but buying into that places shields around us. By coming into the ministry not having all the answers, women may allow space for individuality within a community."

Women in ministry repeatedly express two goals which may appear at first contradictory. The first is to break into the male hierarchy, and to claim a share of the decision-making power which is their due. The second is to begin to lead the church away from the hierarchical approach toward a more cooperative one, in which the lines are less sharply drawn between clergy and laity. "It's not," says Carter Heyward, "simply wanting to get in and be part of the power-tripping and

turn to page 66

Women from page 43

become bishops and have people grovel at our feet."

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"Our style of operation," says Connie Parvey, pastor at the University Lutheran Church and chaplain at Harvard and MIT, "is considerably different. The old patriarchal, hierarchical, authoritative way of structuring relationships — all these things are really challenged by women in the ministry."

Parvey graduated from seminary in 1962, and was

ordained 10 years later following the Lutheran vote to admit women to the ordained ministry in 1970. One of her reasons for seeking ordination was the reality of the power hierarchy. "Within the structures of the church, as much as we talk about the priesthood of all believers, in terms of influence, and policy, and teaching, it is the ordained ministry and the seminaries through whom all the decisions were made that I was interested in — the theological decisions."

At the same time, she

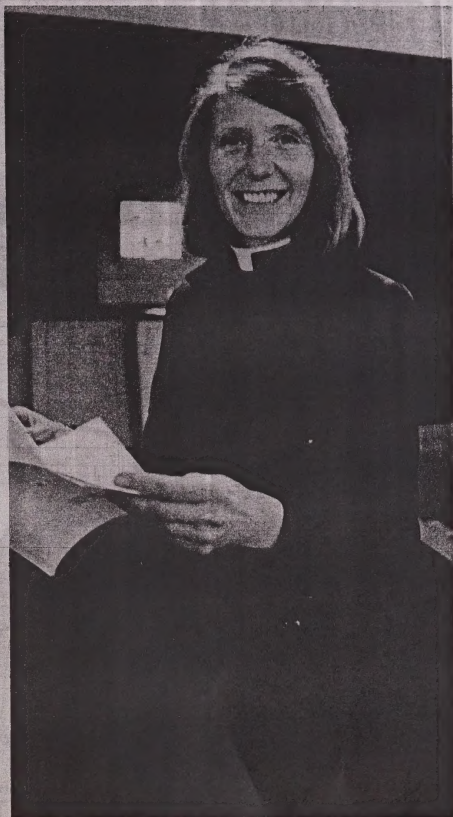
did not want to fashion herself after male pastors. "I had no role models. I couldn't see myself wearing a clerical collar. I certainly didn't see myself as a Lutheran pastor. The ones I saw I didn't want to be like — not that they didn't do their job well, but they were not a model for me."

Parvey feels that her presence, as a female minister, "communicates something new. I can help a lot of people who have never had their needs satisfied in the church. Women have really never trusted their own spiritual identity because it has always come in male form. So they've always thought the authority was someplace else. When they hear me preach and see me function as a liturgist, they can criticize me as another woman, and they can say, 'I could do that better.' It validates their own spiritual and intellectual life."

Access to ordination, and the opportunity it brings to forge a new style of leadership are not magic antidotes to all sexism. Feminists within Judaism are faced with a particularly complex panoply of issues, of which access to the rabbinate is only one. Since Sally Preisand became the first woman rabbi in Reform Judaism in 1972, seven other women have been ordained and, as in all faiths, a growing number will undoubtedly follow. So far, the Reform and Reconstructionist traditions are the only ones allowing women to be ordained rabbis; it may be some time before the more conservative branches of Judaism follow.

Last year, Barbara Herman became the first woman in Reform Judaism to be officially designated cantor, another vital ceremonial role in Judaism. But Jewish feminists are rethinking many other traditions which have excluded or subordinated women. Practice varies widely within Judaism. In the Orthodox practice, for instance, only men are allowed in the main part of the synagogue while women are relegated to their own separate section. This is not true of other branches of Judaism, but in Conservative Judaism women have only recently begun to be counted in the "minyan," the quorum necessary for worship.

Since many rituals, like the ritual around circumcision and naming at birth and the Bar Mitzvah for boys at 13, relate specifically to gender,



Rev. Connie Parvey is pastor of the University Lutheran Church in Cambridge and a chaplain at Harvard and MIT.

Jewish feminists are seeking parallel but not identical ceremonies for women. For instance, Cherie Koller-Fox worked with young girls she taught in Belmont to expand the Bat Mitzvah ceremony for 13-year-old girls by incorporating a jacket and blue silk headband with a Hebrew verse on it which were symbolic counterparts of the prayer shawl and yarmulke (skullcap) worn by boys. "I have come to believe," Koller-Fox wrote, "that women should not merely copy men, but should discover their own modes of expression . . . Bat Mitzvah should not be an exact imitation of Bar Mitzvah, but should come to make a statement of its own."

The new female leaders in all faiths seem to echo this desire to not merely imitate men but to innovate and change institutions as they rise within them. In doing so,

they must first confront the fact that they are challenging deep and ancient assumptions. "You're dealing with an ancient patriarchal structure," Connie Parvey points out, "with a long concept of male hierarchy. That's just what you're up against, not only in the institutional church but that's also the perception of most of the people in your congregation."

"You're up against the structural realities and the psychological realities and the realities of convention. The Levitical priesthood goes back 3000 years and the Christian church has a 2000-year tradition of male priesthood. So, in a sense, to be able to be ordained is only to win the opportunity to change this patriarchal structure. You're really on the forefront of a major change. But I look at that as a superb creative opportunity." ■

Forum

A free exchange of ideas on the issues of the day



'Nowhere in the Bible does it state that women were ordained during the early stages of the church's development. Neither, however, does it state that women were not ordained.'

Priesthood and women

By JOHN R. CRONIN

In July of 1974, 11 women were ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church in the United States; this ordination, as well as subsequent ones, set in motion a series of shock waves within the church that have raised serious questions for all its members. Known in most other countries as the Anglican Church, the church is called Episcopal in this country as a result of anti-English feeling following the Revolutionary War.

The controversy has generated so much discussion that the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal church, John M. Allin offered his resignation if it would help to alleviate the situation. In several Episcopal dioceses, dissident church groups have grown whose basic tenet is that they do not wish to be part of a church which ordains women.

Furthermore, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox have made it quite clear that the Episcopal church has placed a barrier in the way of reunion by this decision.

Historically, Protestant churches have ordained women to the ministry for well over a century. While this generated some controversy in the beginning, most churches accept ministers of both sexes. The problem, then, lies with the churches which distinguish between the priesthood and the ministry — the Episcopal, Orthodox and Roman Catholic denominations.

A minister is a person who is authorized to perform religious functions in the church or religious community that he serves; he preaches, leads church activities and basically functions as the religious leader within the community. In practically all Christian churches, the ministry is shared by members of both sexes, including the Roman Catholic church which recently has restored to its laity many of its ministerial functions, such as distribution of communion.

The distinctive aspect of the priesthood, especially for the Roman Catholic, Episcopal and Orthodox churches, involves the definition of the priest as one who offers sacrifice. Priests in these churches are ordained to emulate, during the liturgical celebration, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. This is the cen-

tral act of worship in which bread and wine become the symbol of Christ's body and blood.

Historically, then, the ministry has been more flexible to membership of either gender; in fact even the early Christian churches had a tradition of admitting women to the diaconate, a step in holy orders short of the priesthood itself.

Two basic arguments are employed against the admission of women to the priesthood. They are based on the tradition of these churches and the interpretation of Scripture.

Tradition, quite simply, states that there is no history of women ever being ordained. Basing its argument on the scriptures and all church history subsequent to the New Testament, this thesis has historical validity. In contrast to this it should be noted that as often as tradition has been the safeguard of whatever is good about a church, it has often functioned as a millstone in the path of developing changes which in-themselves become new traditions. The argument from tradition, then, has its strength and its weakness.

Nowhere in the Bible does it state that women were ordained during the early stages of the church's development. Neither, however, does it state that women were not ordained. Christ was as close to several of his female disciples as he was to the Apostles.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Christ worked within the framework of the society within which he lived. In that society, women had a secondary status as part of Jewish tradition. The question arises then whether it is valid to exclude women from the priesthood in a society such as ours in which women are in the process of attaining equality.

Proponents of the ordination of women point out that the theological and church circles which are against ordination are nearly exclusively male. They feel that these points then need to be reconsidered without the "shadow" of sexual chauvinism clouding this issue.

Roman Catholics were mostly in the dark on many changes which resulted from the Vatican II Council decisions. The resultant problems

and issues need not be repeated here. Even in the Orthodox churches, as they adapt their practices in a western cultural setting, are facing problems of adjustment.

The Episcopal church has made the initial break; it has ordained and will continue to ordain women. By virtue of this event, it will continue to be more and more difficult for the other churches to continue to exclude women from the ranks of the priesthood.

Church history is replete with stories of the confusion and dissension caused by any serious change or upheaval within a church's organizational structure.

The Lambeth conference, the plenary session of the Anglican churches, altered its traditional stands on birth control and divorce less than 20 years ago. This occurred without much advance notice to Anglican communicants; causing not only emotional and mental stress but also clear problems of conscience for many members.

How these churches respond to this new issue will provide another test of their meaning for, and relationship to the modern world. They cannot make the mistake of saying that it won't ever happen only to deal with a sudden reversal in some future era. As they continue to bar women from ordination, they will face the continuing problem of making their church relate to women while yet barring them from their highest ranks.

If the ordination of women is to eventually become a universally accepted practice, then the churches must prepare their members for this distinctive departure from longstanding tradition. This will certainly help to lessen, if not avoid, what may otherwise be a traumatic event in the lives of the faithful members of such churches.

The controversy of women entering the priesthood is far from over. How the churches which are involved in this crisis respond to it will be a serious measure of their ability to relate to an ever changing world.

Mr. Cronin, the librarian at the Herald American, was a theological student.

Cry babies and cannibals in the COP

New England pulse

The 200-mile fishing limit is 'starving us out'

Dick Walker: A fisherman for nearly 60 years.



By JOHN WILPERS

PORTLAND, Me. — Dick Walker's grandfather was a fisherman. So was his father. Dick's been fishing since he was 14, almost 60 years old. And his two sons are following in his footsteps.

But the Walker family tradition probably ends right there, according to Dick. It might even end there, he says, ironically the victim of a recent federal law everyone thought was going to save the domestic fisherman and his rapidly diminishing stock of fish.

According to Walker, the 200-mile limit, which went into effect earlier this year, is broadly and incorrectly thought to have virtually eliminated massive foreign "factory ships" from the waters off our shores, thereby giving the depleted fish a chance to recover and the fishermen, especially the little ones, a chance not only to survive but to prosper.

Everybody thought they were going to drive them foreigners out,

Mr. Wilpers has worked for several weekly and daily newspapers in New England. This is the first of a series of columns in which he asked a citizen with an interesting background, "What's on your mind." His next column will appear on this page Thursday.

is so irregular borders on insanity or at least reflects a total lack of understanding of the business. "No way in hell can you set your nets to catch any certain species because a lot of fish travel together. In other words, we set for pollack and get cod too. You can't tell what or how much you're going to catch. It's a gamble. It's always been a gamble. You might get nothing — so many times you don't get anything.

"I went to a meeting (with government officials) the other night and I says to one of the guys that was doing all the talking — I says you're starving us out. If we get a limit on

around. They're supposed to be our servants. But they're not."

According to Walker, government officials charged with enforcing the 200-mile limit and all its rules and regulations are behaving more like public nuisances than public servants. "The law is only as good as the people that operate it and I'll tell you how ridiculous things are.

"I caught a big seven hundred pound tuna in my nets but because I don't go tuna fishing I didn't have no license to bring one in — this new license (part of the 200-mile limit law) that they never used to have. I called up on the radio and talked to the man who buys my fish from me and told him to see if he couldn't get a special license for me to bring the fish in. It was dead anyway, see?

"I tried to do what was right. And what do you think they come up with? They called the federal government and they said: 'Tell that man not to bring it in. If he does it will be a \$5000 fine.

"Can you imagine the frustra-

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN MINISTERS

Palmer Celebrates Despite UK Ban

2 IAWM Members Invite US Woman To Manchester

Episcopal Priest Alison Palmer of Washington, D.C. celebrated the Eucharist in England twice in mid-October. Both actions were in violation of a ban against women priests' officiating in worship services in Anglican churches of the United Kingdom.

Her first action, on October 11, was made possible by the invitation of the Revs. Alfred and Pheobe Willetts, rector and deaconess of the Parish Church of the Apostles in the Diocese of Manchester. Both are members of the International Association of Women Ministers.

The second celebration took place the following Sunday, October 16, at the Church of St. Thomas the Martyr, Newcastle on Tyne. The sermon preached on that occasion appears on pages 2 and 8 of this issue.

On that same afternoon the Willetts officially reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of their diocese that Rev. Palmer had celebrated the Eucharist according to the rites of the Church of England at their parish church the preceding Tuesday. The service, they wrote, had been attended by parishioners who are regular parish communicants.

They added:

"We both take full responsibility for having invited the Rev. Alison Palmer to celebrate in the parish in which we serve as clergy, as we do not recognize any inequality between us, although in the eyes of the Establishment we were inducted as Rector and licensed as Deaconess.

"The reasons for this service were our need to celebrate:

"1. The fact of our creation as men and women and the creative partnership we are called to manifest in the world.

"2. The glorious gift of our equal salvation through Jesus Christ.

"3. The New Covenant in Christ whereby the old male-only dedication of circumcision was done away and women and men alike were made heirs of all the divine promises and full

members of the Church through baptism.

"4. Our equal call as women and men to be priests and prophets of the priestly people of God, the new Israel.

"5. The Resurrection of the Suffering Servant as the Divine and Risen Lord of the Church, while seeking to destroy the false image of God as the all-male-warrior-God.

(Continued on page 3)

Faulk Chosen President; '78 Assembly Set for Texas

The 1978 Assembly of the International Association of Women Ministers will take place July 24 to 27 at Bright Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas. Beverly Faulk of Commercial Point, Ohio, was elected president; Helen Zigmund who had served as president for 1976-77 was unable to continue in office because of ill health.

Pauline Thames of Fort Worth, Texas, was named second vice president; she will chair the program committee of the next Assembly. The 22 women who met at Marydale in Erlanger, Kentucky in October, decided that the Fall is not a good meeting time and set the next Assembly again for Summer.

Other new officers elected at the meeting include first (international) vice president, Hilda Frank Seater of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; third (membership) vice president, Helen June Heath Knapp of Colorado Springs, Colorado and recording secretary, Millicent Mae Moore of Carrollton, Ohio. Continuing in office are Constance Bradshaw of Montello, Wisconsin general secretary; Mary Hoffman Ryan, treasurer, and Barbara Brown Zigmund of Chicago, Illinois, historian.

The Assembly authorized President Faulk to appoint an assistant treasurer to share the work of that office when someone can be found to accept. Trustees continue to be Cora A. Davis, Emma Burrell, Judith Craig and Mary

Hoffman Ryan; Cora Davis is convener of that group.

Former President Helen Zigmund of Westbrook, Maine, could not attend the Assembly because of painful illness. Greetings were sent to her by all women present.

Two sessions with pastoral theology Peggy Way of Vanderbilt Divinity School and business sessions which struggled to chart the future of IAWM were the important events of the meeting. The business sessions focused on the monetary crisis the organization faces immediately.

Treasurer Ryan reported income in 1977 of \$4,101 and expenditures of \$5,882.35. She had to withdraw nearly \$2,000 from savings to cover the deficit. Love gifts received at the Assembly could not be totaled and recorded before the Assembly adjourned. Although the presence of 35 persons at \$51 each for

(Continued on page 7)

Official Journal of the
International Association
of Women Ministers

Rev. M. Madeline Southard, Founder
(1887-1967)

Vol. 55 October-December, 1977 No. 4

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Prophets, Old and New

Sermon preached by the Rev. Allison Palmer, priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, at the Anglican Church of St. Thomas the Martyr, Newcastle on Tyne, United Kingdom, on October 16, 1977.

This sermon asks one question: Where are the new prophets?

In both the Old and New Testaments we read about prophets—people who challenged the institutions of their time, including religious authorities. Who are today's prophets? We are. Or at least we are supposed to be, if we are Christians.

In the Book of Joel, chapter 2, we find the statement: "I will pour out my Spirit on all people, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." In the Book of

Acts, chapter 2, St. Peter quotes from Joel, including the words, "I will endue even my slaves, both men and women, with a portion of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." St. Peter explains the events of Pentecost by saying that when the Holy Spirit is present, people prophesy. Therefore, as Christians today, if we are going to claim to have received the Holy Spirit, we must accept the responsibility to be prophets.

What is a prophet? In the Bible, prophets are men and women who proclaim the Word of God in a particular situation, challenging the beliefs and practices of their time. Prophets came from all classes of people, even slaves. Some were farmers, some were government employees; a few were priests, most were not. Not one of them chose to be a prophet. It was a responsibility thrust upon each one when she or he was compelled by the inspiration of the Spirit to speak out against evil, oppression, injustice and corruption in order to bring about change. There is a good description in Isaiah, which Jesus quotes in Luke 4: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. . . . The Lord has sent me to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to let the broken victims go free."

Please note that the word, "proclaim," means much more than just to speak in favor of something. There is a good deal of difference between advocating the release of prisoners, and proclaiming that they are free. When prophets in the Bible proclaimed something, they were empowered by the Spirit to cause things to happen. There are usually lots of people around who are in favor of change, but not many prophets *doing* the Word of God.

You may find the idea of being a prophet today rather attractive. Before you become too enthusiastic, consider the experience of the ancient prophets. There were many times when they

were lonely and frightened, frustrated and tired. Being a prophet was also dangerous. Immediately after Jesus told the crowd that he was a prophet, the people were not only critical and skeptical, but angry. They siezed him and tried to throw him off a cliff.

Today's Prophets

Yet every generation calls forth prophets, despite the dangers and difficulties of this vocation. I want now to give you some examples of prophets whom I know so that you will begin to see the opportunities and tasks which you as prophets are called to address.

My mother is a prophet. She is a teacher, and at 70 she was required by law to resign because of her age. She realized that she and many thousands of other teachers were being forced to bury their talents because of this compulsory retirement. So she found a lawyer and filed a suit to have the law changed. She is challenging the idea that old people are useless.

A young woman priest, Carole Crumley, is a prophet. Last year, when she was a deacon, she was leading a discussion on the ordination of women; a conservative male priest stood up and said, "The women seeking ordination are the cause of all the tension in our church today, and this tension is destroying the church." Carole replied, "The Episcopal Church is in a state of tension because of its own sense of guilt for its discrimination against women. Sex discrimination is a sin. It is an offense against the Gospel. The Church knows it is in a state of sin, and the Church's destructive tension is caused by its own sense of guilt." The male priest was silent, but later he said to Carole, "I couldn't argue with what you said; you are right." Carole's prophetic proclamation had brought

(Continued on page 8)

Palmer—

(Continued from page 1)

"6. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God."

In a statement issued in Manchester and dated October 11, Rev. Palmer listed three concerns she has about the ban against women priests' officiating in the United Kingdom.

The first is sacramental: the effect of the ban is to impede church members from receiving communion from a priest he/she chooses and the priest from providing it. Yet the tradition allows the priest-communicant relationship to be free of interference.

The second is pastoral, she says; United Kingdom women who are suffering spiritual deprivation and pain because they cannot be ordained need pastoral and spiritual comfort which women priests who have experienced this pain are especially qualified to provide.

The third is the damage to the Anglican Communion says Rev. Palmer: prior to this time priests ordained anywhere in the Anglican Communion could be accepted and recognized anywhere else; the ban breaches this tradition. It will become more awkward as more women are ordained in North America. "Male priests of the Church of England must feel greatly embarrassed at officiating in the United States or at inviting male priests from the United States to of-

ficiate in the United Kingdom while American women priests are banned from officiating in the U.K."

The reason given for banning women priests states that canon law which allows priests from other branches of the Anglican faith to officiate in the United Kingdom has traditionally been interpreted to mean male priests. Rev. Palmer replies, first, that since there have been no female priests, the law has to this time found no opportunity for any other interpretation. An argument opposing the ban points out that canon law refers to priests and that women priests *are* priests.

Justice Evolves

She continues that the only way to start a new tradition which understands the law to include both men and women is to have women priests officiate. British justice is constantly evolving, not fixed at some past time, she adds.

Finally she cites the traditions of freely-chosen relationships between communicant and priest and pastor and church member, plus the tradition of recognizing all priests of the Anglican Communion. These, she says, are "far more important than the 'traditionally interpreted to mean male priests' argument."

Although Rev. Palmer preached at the Service on October 16, Deaconess Phoebe Willetts preached at the celebration in Manchester October 11.

Using John 17:20-23 as her text, she said that *all* who were going to believe in Jesus (not just those gathered around him at that moment) are to become one "with the same quality of Oneness which lies within the heart of the Trinity, so that the world could know that Jesus was the Christ."

Yet in the church we see that oneness split "right down the centre between men and women, sideways between young and old, and divided up into separate religious establishments, religious clubs and narrow cliques," she pointed out.

But, she added, on that occasion all had gathered to celebrate "our creation as men and women and our salvation in Jesus Christ . . . for Christ died for men and women alike."

She reminded her hearers that when circumcision was done away, not only Gentiles but also women could enter the Christian community and become full members in baptism. "This means that men and women are both equal members of the Priestly People of God and called to be priests and prophets," she added.

It is Jesus Christ as the Suffering Servant, she said, not the "all-male-warrior-god of the Old Testament" whom we proclaim. She concluded: "We are going to have the Church that Christ died for by celebrating the salvation which he bought for us." Then the Rev. Alison Palmer celebrated the Eucharist, the first woman priest to do so in the United Kingdom.

To Join IAWM; to Subscribe to The Woman's Pulpit

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Women Who Minister

Bible Sexism Forum Set By COWIM

A public forum on "Sexism and the Bible" sponsored by the Commission on Women in Ministry of the National Council of the Churches of Christ was one project reviewed at its meeting in Manressa, Annapolis, Maryland, October 19 to 21. The forum will be held at the Interchurch Center December 8 from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Progress reports were also received from the Consultation of Ethnic Minority Women which will be held April 20 to 23 in the National 4-H Center, Washington, D.C., and the Women in Ministry Week which has been held for several years at Grailville and will be held again next August.

Speakers at the forum on "Sexism and the Bible" will be Dr. Phyllis Tribble, associate professor of Old Testament at Andover Newton Theological Seminary; Dr. William Holliday, professor of Old Testament at Andover Newton; Dr. Schuyler Brown Jewitt, professor of New Testament at General Theological Seminary in New York City and Sr. Anne Patrick Ware of the Commission on Faith and Order, NCCCUSA, speaking on liturgy and the development of the use of Scripture and the function of language in these areas. Moderator will be Dr. Beverly Harrison, professor of Christian Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

COWIM reviewed plans for the Women's Interseminary Conference which will meet at Eden Theological Seminary in February; it co-sponsors the event and its six task forces will lead workshops related to their agendas. (See story elsewhere in this issue.)

The commission reaffirmed its decision to co-sponsor the Seminary Quarter at Grailville next summer. The 1978 event, the first of two major events planned for the next two years, will be a series of regional programs dealing with women and sexuality, women and worship, women and violence and white and minority

women oppression in theological education. The second major event, in 1979, will be a six-week program for white and ethnic minority women, to be held in an urban setting. The second event will establish a new educational philosophy and will seek a balance of ethnic minority and white women participants. SQAG is accredited through the United Theological Seminary of the United Methodist Church in Dayton, Ohio.

Joan Martin resigned as convener of COWIM because of the press of responsibilities in her new work on the staff of the NCC's Division of Church and Society. Emma Justes, American Baptist representative from Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas, was elected interim convener.

Commission members adopted a "Declaration of Faith" to be its message to the National Women's Convention in Houston November 18 to 21. They discussed implications of the Bakke case, reaffirmed COWIM's commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity within church and society and strongly opposed the arguments of "reverse discrimination" the case raises.

Black Women In Ministry Offered Support

More than 50 persons joined in celebration and dialog at the Black Women in Ministry gathering September 25 at Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Women and men, ordained and lay, Catholic and Protestant, Afro-Americans and Africans, they also took part in the Harvard Divinity School chapel service led by Rena Karefa-Smart and Kenneth Carstens in recognition of Steve Biko, slain South African freedom fighter.

BWIM is affiliated with the Black Theological Coalition of the Boston Theological Institute and with the Black Ecumenical Commission of Massachusetts. Of nearly 2,000 students enrolled with the BTI cluster, fewer than 20 are black women.

Seminaries frequently fail to offer definitions of ministry, academic studies and practical training appropriate to the needs of these students, reports Adele Smith, coordinator. Moreover, she points out, lay women, historically the foundation of the black church, often lack advocacy and support systems.

Working closely with Greater Boston churches and seminaries, BWIM seeks to address needs of both lay and ordained religious leaders. BWIM led a workshop on racism at the Women's Theological Coalition gathering on October 5. The women have been invited to participate in the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, consultation on women's studies in theological education.

Recognizing that ministry takes diverse forms within lay and ordained contexts, BWIM serves as an advocate for black women seminarians, ministers, theologians and church leaders. Programming ranges from developing informal support networks to disseminating information, sponsoring topical conferences and impacting seminaries and churches. BWIM invites ideas, feelings and efforts of all people seeking to strengthen black women's contributions in ministry. Contact the office at Harvard Divinity School, Andover Hall 8, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138 (603-495-1972) or telephone Adele Smith at Andover Newton (603-965-5610).

Seminary Women Move Meeting

The sixth annual Women's Interseminary Conference has been moved from Eden Theological Seminary just outside St. Louis, MO. to United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in New Brighton, MN. Both are United Church of Christ seminaries; because Missouri has not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment, the UCC Advisory Committee on Women late in October asked Eden seminary to make this sacrifice in support of equal rights and justice for women.

Faculty and students at Eden, men and women, shared in the decision to

(Continued on page 8)

Dutch Catholic Researches Feminism And Christianity

Dr. Catharina J. M. Halkes has been named to a special position for research on the relationship between feminism and Christianity at the theological faculty of the Catholic University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. She began her work September 1. The position is provisional, for four years.

No Catholic theological faculty in the world except in the United States has previously created a post for the critical approach to theology from the viewpoint of women. The initiative at Nijmegen is supported by the Emancipation Commission, the Roman Catholic Women's Movement, the Foundation of Dutch Women Religious, the Dutch and West German women academies and other groups.

Dr. Halkes is a theologian who has been intensively engaged in study of relations between Christianity and feminism. Currently a high tension exists between feminism and Christianity in her experience. She therefore conceives her program as including:

An inventory of various aspects of feminism inside and outside The Netherlands. Feminist theology will receive special attention in this study.

Contacting representatives from feminist movements.

Collecting, cataloging and making available literature related to the study.

Lifting up points of friction between feminism and Christianity and relating religious and theological issues to philosophical, psychological and sociological issues.

Indicating areas of priority for further research and seeking the possibility of a more structured interdisciplinary collaboration in the future.

The university sees the importance of this new position for theology as "a new approach (to theology) from the point of view of women, who have not been able to make a contribution to theology for the last 20 centuries. This experience and mentality of women in our culture, in regard to faith and morals, has until now played only a minimal role. It can be postulated that Christianity can only prove its credibility when it eliminates every form of repression, too, within its own structures."

Dr. Halkes can be contacted at the

Catholic University of Nijmegen (Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen), Erasmuslaan 4, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

UPUSA Endorses Equality In Ordination

Overtures from two presbyteries, Seattle and Pittsburgh, to the United Presbyterian General Assembly proposed changes in the fifth question asked at the ordination of ministers, elders and deacons. At the beginning of the Assembly this fifth question read: "Do you endorse our Church's government, and will you honor its discipline?" The overtures would ask the ordinand to "submit" to that government or "not determinedly oppose it."

The overtures had been developed by persons with concerns for Presbyterians who have scruples of conscience about ordaining women.

Ruling Elder William P. Thompson, Stated Clerk of the GA, defined "endorse" as requiring intellectual affirmation. One cannot submit, he said, without endorsing. Non-concurrence was recommended. (One candidate in one presbytery had been denied ordination because his understanding of Scripture would not allow him to participate in the ordination of women who were elected to session, though he would have been willing for another minister to do so.)

United Presbyterian Women President Ann Herbert asked non-concurrence. She said, "Passage of either of these overtures would be a step backward and would have an alienating, depressing effect upon the spirits of many Presbyterian women. If a congregation knows that its pastor believes that it is wrong to ordain women, it is not likely that women will be nominated and elected to the session. Thus the church would be deprived of the talents of its female members in decision-making positions.

After extensive debate the Assembly voted non-concurrence by a substantial majority. The decision affects candidates for ordination and persons who are now ordained who are required to answer the fifth constitutional question when installed in any ministry.

Women Appointed To Seminary Faculties in 1977

Union, Philadelphia Lutheran and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminaries are among the seminaries and divinity schools who have added women faculty members this year. News of other appointments will be published as we receive it.

Mary Diane Pellauer from the University of Chicago was named the first assistant professor of Women in Ministry ever appointed at Union Seminary in New York, New York. She has taught courses on feminist perspectives in Christian theology, women in church history and sexism as a problem in ethics and theology at seven different seminaries. Among her colleagues at Union are Beverly Harrison, professor of Christian social ethics; liberation theologian Dorothea Solle, Dr. Anne Ulanov and Professor Marcia Weinstein.

IAWM member Margaret A. Krych was named assistant professor with primary responsibility in Christian education at Philadelphia Lutheran Theological Seminary, the first woman to be appointed to that faculty. She is a Ph.D. candidate in systematic theology at Princeton Seminary; has been an editor with the Lutheran Church in America Division for Parish Services for four years and served a two-church parish in her native Australia prior to 1970.

Dr. Faith Burgess of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, was given a one-year assignment as resident lecturer in the History of Christianity by PLTS. She has been a lecturer at both Philadelphia and Gettysburg seminaries in the past.

Austin Presbyterian Seminary named Dr. Rachel Henderlite of Richmond, Virginia, as its professor of Christian education beginning January 1, 1978. The first woman ever to be ordained in the Presbyterian Church, U.S. now becomes the first woman ever to hold a professorship in a theological seminary of that church. She has taught in United States and Japan; most recently she served as Director of Curriculum Development, Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the U.S. She is also the author of several books.

Indians Celebrate Ordination Of American Ruth Thurmond

By Lena A. Keans

When Ruth V. Thurmond was ordained by the Samavesam of Telugu Baptist Churches last April 3, women all over our mission area rejoiced. This happened at the Ramapatnam church where she worked with other missionaries and nationals in the Baptist Theological Seminary. The event crowned nearly 40 years of mission service.

The service followed Ruth's examination by an ordination council called by the church, where 62 delegates heard her describe her conversion, call to service, Christian beliefs and Baptist distinctives. They voted to ordain her the next week.

She was dressed in a white silk sari given her by the local women's society; the service was in Telugu. Her Indian, American, Canadian and Swedish friends surrounded her with loving support as Rev. K. C. George led the ceremony. American Baptist missionary Louis F. Knoll preached; 28 ministers took part in the laying on of hands.

Afterwards jubilant Telugu women brought garlands and gifts, a tribute to the sisterhood they felt with this North American woman. A special meal followed. Ruth Thurmond's retirement is imminent; she can look back on her work at the Ramapatnam Baptist Theological Seminary and in the community life of the Telugu Christians and write, "They know my limitations and faults, yet were willing to pioneer in this setting apart for service. And I am humbly grateful."

India is a land of villages. From Hyderabad to Madras on the east coast there are hundreds of villages, and missionaries of many denominations work there. Some have headquarters in the three cities and large towns of the area. Village pastors may have 10 or 12 congregations, but no cars. Even bicycles are expensive. During the rains visits to outlying villages necessarily become rare.

A missionary to India first struggles to learn the language. After a year of study of Telugu, the language of our area, comes the first examination. The written part goes to headquarters; the oral part is judged by a well-educated Telugu man and a missionary who knows the language well. One delivers a sermon to the two examiners. It must be correct Telugu and in words illiterate people will understand. The second examination, a year later, is not so fearsome!

Poor people of the area welcome the fact that the missionary has a car to bring pastor, evangelist or Bible woman to visit their small mud houses. Since many villages have no church buildings, we meet in the school house or under a banyan tree. During the service, for which people quickly gather, children recite the many Bible verses they have learned. The parents take great pride in this.

Christians live in about 60 villages of the Sattenapalle Field. Eight to 10 pastors serve them, but many Christian teachers lead services on Sundays. Bible women visit homes carrying picture rolls to teach illiterate women Bible stories and prayer.

In Narasaravupet, adjoining Sattenapalle, more pastors, Bible women and village teachers serve about 80 villages.

Both boys and girls from Sattenapalle and other nearby stations go to the Narasaravupet School after a few years in village schools. Since they live in dormitories, many parents remove their "big" girls from schools that boys also attend. When Narasaravupet started a girls' high school, boys were sent to another station to be educated. Five boys' high schools and two for girls are operated by the American Baptists. All teach Bible and students have some practice in teaching church school classes for younger children. Most of our mission school graduates are in Christian work.

Christian women of Hyderabad and Madras and the area between are organized into denominational women's unions with fine programs; they are growing in many areas and many of these women are asked to speak in public as part of their work.

Miss Suseela and Miss Susan Matthew are two outstanding graduates of Narasaravupet School. Miss Suseela is gifted and teaches Christian

dramatics over a wide area. She is also treasurer of our sizeable Women's Union, not an easy assignment.

Susan Matthew visited the United States twice to speak in Baptist churches and women's meetings; the first time she studied for a year in Chicago. Last spring she visited Sweden for three months speaking in churches and women's groups. She has visited a youth meeting in Hong Kong and is corresponding about the date for another United States visit. Both her parents are illiterate; they sent her to Narasaravupet School beginning in the fourth grade. I think she surprised them!

(IAWM Member Rev. Lena A. Keans served in India for nearly 40 years.)

Counselling of Battered Women Explored

"Law and the Battered Woman," was the subject of a recent discussion sponsored by the Coalition on Women and Religion in the Portland, Oregon area. The group's members have been studying different aspects of the women's movement and the churches; this topic was examined in response to a growing nationwide awareness that battered women are as serious a problem as battered children.

Rev. Joan Lepley, LCA pastor in Portland and an IAWM member, reported on "Pastoral Counselling and the Battered Wife."

Columbia-Willamette Coalition members have been studying Marriage, Myth and Parenting; Depatriarchalizing the Bible; Celibacy and Homosexuality; and Feminine Mythology. (From *Women's Network News*)

Ordination of Women Helps Split Missouri/ALC

The ordination of women was one of four areas of disagreement mentioned by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in convention in Dallas in July in a resolution declaring it is in a state of "fellowship in protest" with the American Lutheran Church, reports Women's Network News of the LCA Women's Caucus.

A literalistic or "inerrancy" approach to scripture, "the nature and basis of fellowship, and participation in ecumenical functions" were the other issues.

'78 Assembly to Meet in Texas—

(Continued from page 1)

room and board had been guaranteed, only 20 persons both registered and paid fees for the Assembly. (Total attendance of 22 included one local woman who came part-time and the guest speaker.) The question of whether IAWM was responsible for expenses of 22 persons or for 35 guaranteed registrations was unresolved at the close of the Assembly.

Faced with a budgetary crisis, participants approved a 1977 budget of \$5300, and appointed Cora A. Davis convener of the trustees to work out dramatic plans for raising money to enable the organization to continue. All members will receive correspondence from her inviting all of us to "think black": to work at raising money necessary to operate IAWM in ways characteristic of black congregations. She will also propose a celebration at the next Assembly during which this money will be dedicated. The celebration, too, will be designed out of the black experience.

Assembly members approved for the required second time a change in the constitution that makes the following persons members of the executive board in addition to its present membership: the chairperson of each regional association, chairperson of the nominating committee and editor of *The Woman's Pulpit*.

Dues Raise Referred

A proposal to raise dues was referred to an interim committee which will bring a report to the next Assembly.

Myrna Tuttle, who chaired the Special Plus Program to arrange opportunities for seminary students to spend a week with women ministers, reported no success in matching any seminarians with any ordained women for mutually satisfactory visits. A committee consisting of June Knapp, Sally Edwards and Barbara Zikmund was appointed to evaluate and reflect on the program with her; she will continue to work on it for another year, guided by ideas these women offered.

Assembly members received greetings from three members besides President Zigmund who could not attend the Assembly: Mary Clapp and Rhetha Sadler of the U.S. and Florence Frost-Mee of England. Rev. Frost-Mee wrote: "May you discover together more of the power of God, more of the

love of God and more of the possibilities of meeting the needs of others, for I think this is what the Christian ministry is all about."

Members who died during the year were memorialized at the Memorial Service: Charlotte Jones of Claremont, California; Olah Moore of Western Grove, Arizona, and Mabel B. Johnson of Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania.

Peggy Way Keynotes

"My job as a minister is to call forth the church—I want to call forth the church in ministry among you," began Peggy Way at the first session with Assembly members.

She called upon women to begin writing in the field of pastoral theology, where few women are now contributing. She encouraged us to discover what pastors do that is unique, that distinguishes us from therapists and secular humanists.

Rev. Way pointed out that our culture exalts cure, which is dramatic. We are often uncomfortable with the caring that maintains community but "does not seem to go anywhere," she said. She affirmed that an important aspect of the pastoral role is walking hand in hand with people in situations of care and caring, whether or not a cure is possible—or even sought.

Our work is an ongoing living in community with people over time, she pointed out. "If I do not manipulate, I can call forth caring for each other from within people," she said. "I can ask persons to feel that caring, to feel good about it, and to enlarge it. That is important work."

She asked the pastors present to share the sources from which they draw strength to stand with people in this caring ministry. "Our wholeness as biological, chemical, psychological and spiritual people has a lot to do with caring and curing," she reminded the Assembly. She also urged us to learn how to use our time; especially she asked us not to offer to the people we serve the same cultural idea of time they get everywhere else.

In her second address Rev. Way observed things she has learned as she has worked with men. First all of us, including men, still have not dealt with the power of human sexuality in our culture. This, she said, subtly undermines efforts of men and women to work together. "The key dynamic in

male fear of homosexuality is that male fear of being found as acting like a woman," she noted. Until we learn to deal with that and similar dynamics, she believes, we will continue to have our present difficulties.

When we work with men, she said, we must be free to hear and to speak about different ministries of caring, counseling, and securing justice. "When I am able to be present with men and to have them see me in a variety of ways, I can work with them in caring and counseling situations," she explained. For her the men most difficult to work with are young seminary males who do not yet know who they are or where they are going and so are still unsure of themselves, she said.

Women should offer men opportunities through the intimacy of friendship to demonstrate and open up new possibilities of relating to women, she said. Women also need to give men permission to be weak and vulnerable with them, an experience many do not often share with women, she pointed out.

She advised pastors and counselors to maintain a delicate balance of spontaneity and professionalism in work, and affirmed that naiveive can work for and with them.

She encouraged movement from what she called the pre-selfconscious finitude of childhood, where someone else told us what our limits were, into a post-selfconscious affirmation as persons in touch with our own strength and power and into a post-selfconscious finitude that affirms the process of getting back in touch with personal limits. From this perspective, she said, we must be aware both of the free choices we have and the difficulties we face in making them.

"I would invite you to a kind of second naiveive," she said. "You can no longer become a first century Christian. The modern person, however, can walk with a sense of her own humanness, look up and down, and affirm that she is not God, but God is God."

We can take this awareness into those situations which so frequently befall pastors, in which we find ourselves facing that for which we have not been prepared. She offered these suggestions in approaching such situations: 1) Listen carefully; 2) Don't rescue, but join; 3) Know yourself; be empathetic but keep an objective distance from the situation at the same time; 4) Take advantage of surprise opportunity that may emerge; 5) Pray.

Prophets—

(Continued from page 2)

about change in that priest's mind by helping him see the truth.

Many people in the United States believe that the 15 women ordained to the priesthood before our General Convention approved it have served as prophets to the Episcopal Church. Not only had we challenged the Church on discrimination, but we had also exposed the Church's misuse of authority and power. Many Episcopalians, including priests, had never before realized the Church's practice of injustice and oppression within its own institution until the women priests defied and disobeyed the hierarchy.

The Task Before Us

There are women and men in England who are prophets; by their words and deeds they are proclaiming the Will of God. Last Tuesday evening in Manchester, Phoebe and Alfred Willetts enabled me to preside at Holy Communion in their parish church. This morning, Ian Harker and his Church Council enabled me to preside at Holy Communion in this church. These men and women have challenged the Church of England's discrimination against women. I believe these actions are prophetic deeds, a way of giving sight to those blinded by discrimination and a way of setting free captives imprisoned by the injustice of the church. Many more prophets are needed to proclaim the Will of God, even when this means disobeying church authorities.

How can we justify such disobedience? I will quote to you the advice given by the Rt. Rev. John Hines, former Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. He was asked what steps he would expect a priest to go through before disobeying a bishop; he replied: "1) Search the scriptures to find out what the Biblical position is on a given issue; 2) Consult with contemporary

authorities and experts on all sides of the issue, and weigh their views carefully; 3) Pray to God for guidance; 4) Make your decision, carry it out, and be prepared to accept the consequences and penalties."

All of this may sound very militant and aggressive, contrary to some people's idea of Christianity as passive and neutral. But listen to what Jesus said: "Whoever is not for me is against me. Think not that I am come to bring peace to the earth . . . but a sword. I am come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a wife against her mother-in-law; and a man will find enemies under his own roof."

The Church more than any other institution needs prophets to the Church, Christians who will—in love and humility—say to the Church, "This law is unjust; this tradition is oppressive; this practice is no longer adequate." I pray that all of us will be granted the courage and wisdom to carry out our tasks as prophets. For, just as there are many people who have served as prophets to us, there are many looking to us to be their prophets. Only by accepting our responsibilities can we say, with the Psalmist (119): "I walk in freedom wherever I will, because I obey God's law. I will speak of God's law in the presence of kings and not be ashamed."

Let us never be ashamed to proclaim the hope that is in us. Amen.

Seminary Women—

(Continued from page 4)

comply with this request. Meeting dates have been changed from February 10 to 12 to April 21-23. The steering committee at United Seminary will meet with a representative from Eden and one from the conference's national steering committee early in January to plan the April program.

The meeting is cosponsored by the Commission on Women in Ministry of the NCCCUSA which a week before the UCC group's decision had

struggled with the same issue. COWIM had reluctantly agreed to support keeping the meeting at Eden because of work the women had done; this is the first time midwestern women have had opportunity to host the conference.

UM Congregations Like Women Pastors

Early this year United Methodists of the Upper Wisconsin Conference polled congregations who have women pastors. What did they think of the experience? Ellie Amico, of the Commission on Status and Role of Women, reported the results.

Lay members of three congregations that were led by women were enthusiastic. Donald L. Drew of First United Methodist Church, Milton, Wisconsin, said, "Our own woman pastor is very intelligent, personable and a tremendous student of the Bible. She conducts business well. We are very satisfied with her work here and certainly hope to keep her."

Jean Bunders of St. Paul's, Wauzeka, felt "almost 100% of our congregation and the community accepted our woman pastor" and praised her preaching, her tact, her visiting and counseling of all ages and her presiding at meetings. "She is a very warm, Christ-loving, outgoing and energetic Christian pastor and friend," she concluded.

Bessie Sickels of Salem, Eastman, wrote, "... she is bringing us the message of the Bible and the love of Jesus Christ as well as any pastor could," and found her a faithful visitor of the sick, good counselor, sympathetic listener, good teacher. "She has a great deal of determination, is not easily discouraged and is generally an enthusiastic person." She ended, "I don't know what more I can tell you, only that we love her and hope she can be with us for a long time."

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN MINISTERS

AELC Ordains First Woman Pastor

Janith Otte-Murphy became, on October 30, Reformation Sunday, the first woman to be ordained by the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Her ordination took place in St. Paulus Lutheran Church in San Francisco.

At the same time the Rev. Otte-Murphy, a 1976 graduate of Semineux in St. Louis, Mo., was installed as associate pastor of University Lutheran Chapel in Berkeley, Calif., reports *Adam's Rib*, newsletter of the Lutheran Women's Caucus.

Since graduation from seminary she has worked at Kairos Home in Oakland, counseling adolescent women and their families; she will continue to be a kind of worker-priest combining service at Kairos and University Lutheran Chapel.

Of this combination, she says, "As Christians we all live at the intersection of the world and the church. For me, a worker-priest ministry most adequately symbolizes the tension and ambiguity of that position. Being a worker-priest gives me the opportunity to be involved both in the worship life of the institutional church and in the everyday lives of people who aren't associated with the church."

The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches was formed last December by congregations withdrawing from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod because of doctrinal controversy. The Missouri Synod has no women pastors; whether or not women may vote in congregational meetings for church council members is a matter to be decided by each congregation. Women do not serve as national policy or decision makers for that church.

Credit for Jan's ordination, says *Adam's Rib*, is due in part to the perseverance of the Lutheran Women's Coalition, an organization of AELC women on the West Coast. The Pacific Regional Synod convention approved ordination of women at its last meeting; from that time the coalition lobbied for Jan until she received a call.

The Rev. Walter Grumm, pastor of St. Paulus and Presiding Bishop of the AELC's Pacific Regional Synod, participated in the Service, and AELC

Vice President Will Herzfeld ordained the candidate. Her husband, Kairos Home Director Bruce Murphy, and Gustav Schultz, pastor of University Lutheran, installed her.

Friend and former classmate Joan
(Continued on page 8)

'Woman as Proclaimer' Theme Set for '78 Assembly

Nineteen members of the International Association of Women Ministers in Texas welcome you to the 1978 Assembly July 24 to 27 at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, reports registrar and program coordinator Pauline Thames.

Theme of the meeting is "Kerygma: Woman as Proclaimer." One leader will be the Rev. Alice B. Snow, minister of the Church of the Red Rocks (United Church of Christ) in Sedona, Arizona. Her first presentation is titled "The Wonder of Preaching."

Rev. Alice B. Snow has served in Sedona since October, 1973. Since then the community has grown nearly 20 percent while her church membership has doubled. Overall giving to church benevolences—for work beyond the congregation—has tripled. In slightly less than four years the church received 200 new members; the 200th was welcomed on Worldwide Communion Sunday, last October 3. Total church membership today is 409.

Sunday attendance nearly every week is a "full house." Members claim that the life situation sermons of their pastor are helpful as they cope with the nitty-gritty of each day. Rev. Snow tries to balance intellectual stimulation and emotional warmth as she prepares these sermons. She says each must include the comfort of faith and the challenge of Christ, personal commitment and social concern.

Nearly 100 persons named on the weekly bulletin's directory of officers and committees are a really active team in ministry at the Church of the Red Rocks. They are committed and convinced, having a lively ownership in the total church life; Rev. Snow describes



Rev. Alice B. Snow

her work as "an alongside ministry."

Lay members keep handy copies of a brochure that describes life at Red Rocks congregation; their enthusiasm for their church spills over in conversations with friends and they visit newcomers to Sedona to tell about their

(Continued on page 7)

Official Journal of the
International Association
of Women Ministers

Rev. M. Madeline Southard, Founder
(1887-1967)

Vol. 56 January-March, 1978 No. 1

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Job Opportunities

Women's Studies, Harvard Divinity School

A half-time position in women's studies: research and teaching in one theological discipline on questions related to women in the various religious traditions, begins September 1, 1978 to June 30, 1979. Salary: \$5,000. Contact the Coordinator of Women's Programs, Harvard Divinity School, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

U.M. Constituency Services, Washington, D.C.

An associate general secretary is sought for the Office of Constituency Services in the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church. Expectations include leadership education; deployment of staff members and resources into the field, administrative oversight of various units, communications and writing for one magazine. Salary range: \$21,000 to \$24,000. Send resumes to Fran Mettling, Search Committee chairperson, c/o Dr. George H. Outen, General Secretary, Board of Church and Society, 100 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

Perkins School of Theology Dallas, Texas

Three positions in the area of pastoral care, two for faculty positions and one staff position involving half-time teaching and half-time supervision in internship program; for details, contact Leroy T. Howe, Associate Dean, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas 75275.

Scarritt College for Christian Workers, Nashville, Tenn.

A president is sought for the Scarritt College for Christian Workers; letters of nomination or a letter of application with resumé should be sent to chairperson, Presidential Search Committee, Scarritt College, Nashville, TN. 37203. Resumé should include names, addresses and phone numbers of at least three references the Search Committee may contact.

Church Women United New York, New York

Church Women United seeks a director of faith-life and celebrations, a director of citizen action and a director of cultivation; all salaries range from \$15,224 to \$23,027. For details, contact Martha Edens at CWU, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Homiletics Professor, Duke U., Durham, N.C.

An assistant or associate professor is sought in Homiletics for the Divinity School of Duke University; a three year initial appointment. Contact Professor S. C. Henry, Duke Divinity School, Durham, N.C. 27706.

U.M. Global Ministries Research Dir., New York

The United Methodist National Division, Board of Global Ministries, seeks an associate research director. Send resumes and sample of research to Dr. James H. Davis, Research Director, Room 314, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

U.M. Church & Society Official, Washington, D.C.

An associate general secretary is sought for the Division of Human Relations of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society. Salary range: \$20,000 to \$25,000. Applications with resumes should be sent to the Search Committee; Attn: Dr. George H. Outen, address in second item above.

World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland

An executive is sought for the office of Dialogue: Faith and Ideologies of the World Council of Churches. Position requires knowledge of Judaism together with experience of and commitment to dialogue with Jews. For information write to WCC, 150 Route de Ferney, P.O. Box 66, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

Seminary Quarter At Grailville Maps New Course

Seminary Quarter at Grailville will offer regional seminars next summer in addition to its six-weeks residential program in Loveland, Ohio. Besides theological reflection, the 1978 program will encourage analysis of sexism, racism and classism and development of strategies for change.

A weeklong seminar seeking "Strategies for Survival and Change" will be held in Boston, Mass. June 12 to 18. The focus will be consciousness-raising on issues of personal and institutional racism, reflection and input on issues of women in ministry and skill-building in an urban setting. Resource persons are Adele Smith, director of Statewide Ministries for the Black Ecumenical Commission and president of Black Women in Ministry; Dr. Jane Cary Peck of the Andover Newton faculty and Susan Harlow, student at Andover Newton.

The seminar costs \$75; scholarships are available. Academic credit, housing and day care may be arranged.

A seminar on "Christian Women in Dialogue" will be held March 6-10 in Atlanta, Georgia, to examine how racism, classism and sexism function as obstacles to effective ministry among ethnic minority women. One on

"Theological Perspectives on Women and Violence" is set for Grailville June 19 to 26; it will examine race and class analysis of sexual violence and its scriptural and theological roots, as well as prevention and action responses. The latter seminar costs \$100 and is a part of the six-weeks SQAG program.

The Grailville residential program surrounds this seminar, from June 7 to July 19. Participants will design their own programs, working with staff members and drawing upon three one-week seminars: "Image Breaking, Image Building: Feminism and Christian Worship," (June 11-17); "Theological Perspectives on Women and Violence" and "Sexuality: An Integrated Perspective" (July 9-15).

Total cost is \$675; scholarships are available. Academic credit for the residential program is granted by United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Grailville is an educational center for experimentation in community living, social action, the arts, worship and the search for a spiritually rooted life. It is in Loveland, Ohio, near the Cincinnati Airport. The Seminary Quarter at Grailville is sponsored by the Grail and the Commission on Women in Ministry of the National Council of Churches in cooperation with United Theological Seminary in Dayton.

Brochures with forms for registration are available from Kathy Nickerson, Seminary Quarter at Grailville, New Directions, Grailville, Loveland, Ohio 45140.

Delaware Valley Women Form Regional IAWM

Clergywomen and seminary students who have been meeting monthly since October at the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Lutheran Theological Seminary organized in December as the Delaware Valley Association of Women Ministers.

They had invited the approximately two dozen women studying at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary to join them and that night one woman appeared to become a member of the group.

Of the dozen or so women who have met from time to time seven are now IAWM members and they are encouraging the others to enroll. So far as is now known this is the third regional grouping to organize within IAWM; the other two are in Eastern Ohio and Indiana.

Judith Bahrs is convener of DVAWM and Audrey Foley is recorder. Both are PLTS students. In January the group planned to discuss the pension benefits available in three different denominations (women volunteered to investigate their own churches' policies) and focus on discriminatory policies in order to raise questions about them. At the March meeting they plan to discuss clergy placement.

To Join IAWM; to Subscribe to The Woman's Pulpit

To receive this journal, individuals must join the International Association of Women Ministers in one of six membership categories listed below. University and seminary libraries may subscribe for \$4.50 a year. Check the appropriate box and send your check or money order to: Rev. Mary Hoffman Ryan, Treasurer, 1464 West 101st Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44102.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Ministerial Member (ordained, licensed or authorized as clergy, or met above requirements but denomination does not ordain women)—\$10 | ☐ Sustaining Member (lay men and women in sympathy with IAWM purpose)—\$10 |
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| ☐ Fraternal Member (clergy men; professional agencies)—\$10 | ☐ Retired Member (retired and ask to be so designated)—\$5 |
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Mary of Magdala, Apostle

By La Vonne Althouse

"Jesus said to her, 'You may not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and sisters and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord.'"

The first two verses of the twentieth chapter of John's gospel show us Mary of Magdala going to the tomb of Jesus of Nazareth early on the morning of the first day of the week after the Crucifixion—for no apparent reason. Verses 11 to 18 of the same chapter show a tender scene of reunion between Jesus and Mary which may be at once the most misunderstood passage of the New Testament and the most unnoticed.

In the King James version the words which the RSV translates as, "Do not hold me," are rendered from the Latin Vulgate, "*Nolo me tangere*," which means in English, "Do not touch me!" This misrepresentation of the Greek, which we suppose to be original, has led scholars to interpret the passage as the risen Lord's rejection of a woman's touch. They contrast this with the same Lord's invitation to Thomas, later in the same chapter, to "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." Apparently, they infer from this comparison of inaccurate and accurate translation, Jesus the Christ, even after he had risen, had one attitude toward women and another toward men—even in the Resurrection, by inference of these translations, Jesus remains an orthodox Jewish male.

But the Greek rendering of these words invites a far different interpretation, and other male scholars have interpreted them vastly differently. "*Me mou haptou*," the Greek words used here, may mean anything from "do not touch my clothing," to "no sexual relationship is now possible between us"! Several men have pointed to the use of the verb, "*haptete*" here to argue that Jesus and Mary had been husband and wife before his death and that the risen Christ is explaining he can no longer have the relationship a mortal husband would have with his wife.

The range of difference between the meanings of the Greek and Latin renderings of this passage offer some scope for interpretation. This presentation will opt for an interpretation somewhere between the extremes which are equally insensitive to the nuances of relationships which may develop between women and men.

Crass interpretations which suggest

a putdown of Mary on the one hand and a possible former marital relationship on the other come in part from a lack of imagination about the variety of rich friendships men and women can develop; they may be also encouraged, however, in part, by the fact that we have so little information about Mary of Magdala.

She came from a small town near Capernaum in Galilee, where Jesus began his preaching ministry. Did she hear him preach the Sermon on the Mount or the Sermon on the Plain or some long teaching session later? Did she see Jesus feed 5,000 or 4,000 hungry men plus women and children; was she one of those nourished with miraculous food at the end of a long, hot day of learning? We do not know. She is identified only as a woman possessed by seven devils when she met Jesus. The description, "seven devils," indicates that, whatever was wrong with her, her family and friends considered her situation hopeless.

Early in the second century this Mary was first identified with the woman taken in adultery, yet, as scholars point out, there is no scriptural evidence for this. It remains a favorite interpretation among film makers curious about the mysterious woman with the obscure past. It is equally popular to identify her with the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, though one gospel writer clearly contradicts this fantasy by identifying that woman as Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus.

If we reject both of these favorite falsehoods, however, what shall we make of Mary? How shall we learn more about her? Luke identifies her as one of several women who gave their private wealth to support Jesus'

itinerant ministry. He mentions several others, but describes only one of them as married—Joanna who he says is the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. William Phipps speculates that other women among the group were in fact the wives of apostles who went out with the 70 to proclaim Jesus' message and who were following Jesus because their husbands followed him. Phipps leaps from this speculation to the conclusion that Mary of Magdala is the wife of Jesus even though the gospels do not acknowledge this.

One could equally readily argue the opposite: that any woman named but not identified with a husband or son is lacking such identification *because she has no marital or maternal relationship to identify her at that moment*. If Mary of Magdala has no husband or son with whom to be identified, yet at the same time has private wealth that she is free to decide to contribute to the support of an itinerant preacher, she is almost certainly the daughter of a wealthy Jewish household where there were no sons to inherit; or she may not be Jewish! (Phipps' argument that these women of some means were wives of disciples will not wash, either, because in that case the money would not be theirs, but their husbands'!)

The wife of Herod's steward, who may have been a Roman, might have been free to travel about the countryside in this unusual way, but it is astonishing indeed in any case to find Hebrew women following even a group of religious men in that day and age. One can only suppose they have no husbands and children to keep them at home; in fact that their lives no longer have any meaning in the community, if they wander about in this fashion. Only a widow could be free to leave her home; only a widow would find life empty enough to choose such a course of action.

Therefore I suggest that Mary of Magdala was a woman of great wealth, without any family who met Jesus when she was crushed with grief over

her empty life, perhaps suicidal, certainly inconsolable. Her great wealth, in fact, may have been her greatest torment if one of the horrors she was enduring was the pursuit of suitor after suitor eager to get his hands on her money.

Into the darkness of her grief, frenzy, despair, mistrust of all, but especially men, Jesus of Nazareth reached with the light of the love of God—and she responded and was healed. This man, busy with his own ministry and full of his God-given mission, would have asked nothing of her in return. He would have offered a tender regard and friendship that ignored her fortune. And so she was free to decide to share in his ministry by supporting it—secure in the knowledge that he would not overstep limits or make demands she was not ready to fulfill, but would indeed respect her as an independent person.

All who watched four years of the television drama, *Upstairs, Downstairs*, have been presented with a relationship between two people free to marry each other, living in the same household for at least a dozen years, deeply fond of each other, but choosing not to express their relationship in sexual union. If that fiction is believable, why should we not assume Jesus, with his all consuming passion for his mission, could have a warm friendship with a woman without wanting to marry her, or actually marrying?

We see the light of the new life and new hope which Jesus brought into Mary's life warming through two or three years into a trusting and close friendship. We wonder at this, for men in that culture did not form close friendships with women, so far as we know. Yet Jesus had a warm friendship with Mary and Martha as well as Lazarus of Bethany, and seems also to have closely befriended this Mary of Galilee.

But the light and joy of all those friendships was snuffed out on that cruel day we call God's Friday when day turned to night at noon and an earthquake rent the earth. And the darkness of the grave must have followed those who entombed Jesus as they went that evening to a sorrowful Sabbath worship.

But through all this darkness did a light of hope burn in the heart of Mary of Magdala? Did she remember what the other disciples seemed to have forgotten—that he taught he must be

crucified and die and be buried—and on the third day rise again? Why else did she go early on the morning of the first day of the week to the grave of Jesus?

Yes, Mark and Luke say the women (three or more) went to the tomb with spices because the body had not been properly embalmed. But neither Matthew nor John mention any such excuse; John, in fact, says Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped the body with 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes—which should have been enough to properly bury any man five feet nine inches tall weighing about 160 pounds! Scholars who wish to harmonize John's account with Mark's and Luke's say Joseph of Arimathea, (and Nicodemus, according to John) had to hurry the burial because sundown was near. But it is amusing, to say the least, to imagine that two members of the Sanhedrin did not know how to properly bury a body or would be hurried into doing it improperly. That's rather like saying that two of the 33 members of the Lutheran Church in America's Council of Synodical Presidents would not, between them, conduct a proper Christian burial service if they were emotionally involved and time were somewhat limited.

And so we here trust the tradition remembered in Matthew and John. It says that Mary of Magdala (and possible one other Mary, for two witnesses were necessary!) went to the tomb on the first day of the week for no clearly specified reason. Just possibly she or they believed that Jesus would rise as he had promised.

Mary (according to Matthew, with her companion) found the empty tomb and ran to tell the disciples. Matthew says the two met Jesus and he sent with them the message that he would meet the disciples in Galilee. And the disciples believed the two women immediately! That is astonishing, because women could not be valid witnesses in a Jewish court even if two agreed—only men could testify.

John says there was only one witness, Mary. He agrees with Luke and Mark that the disciples did not believe the story of the empty tomb. John may also be saying this disbelief was the last straw for Mary of Magdala—she returned to the tomb and this time she began to cry.

Then, says John, Jesus came and identified himself—and she greeted him with her name for him, Teacher,

which does not sound like a wife's or lover's greeting. The text also implies that she ran to him and at least grabbed hold of his hands in joy. Being a 20th century woman, I envision her grabbing him and hugging him for joy as any of us would grab a friend returned from a long absence.

Because she grasps him tightly, at least by the hands, Jesus says, logically, "You cannot hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father." Jesus has not yet finished his work and, as always, nothing can interfere with that. Instead, he now has special work for Mary to do. She shall be the apostle who reports to the disciples. "But go to my brothers and sisters (*adelphous* means both, and both men and women followed Jesus and were present at Pentecost, especially according to Luke) and say to them I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

So Mary, the light of hope again burning brightly in her heart in this newest relationship to the risen Christ, reports to the others, "I have seen the Lord," and tells them what he said to her.

"I have seen the Lord." Jesus, who sent Judas to complete the work he had chosen, now sends Mary on a mission the risen Lord has chosen for her and has chosen her for. This is the first time we have any written record that Jesus sent a woman to proclaim the good news. And hers is the greatest good news, that on which all the preaching of the gospel has hinged from that day to this: Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!

Mary, who believed the resurrection would happen, stands before the risen Lord in the place of all believers who will come after her. On our behalf she embraces the risen Christ in joy, then turns at once to fulfill the mission on which he sends her.

Mary, the believer, wins the commission of an Apostle on the occasion of her faithfulness because the services of an apostle are needed at that time. And so a woman becomes the first witness to the Resurrection, and a sign forever that women are called to full apostlehood with men in the church of Jesus Christ.

When the woman with a flow of blood touched his garment, then confessed she had sought healing, Jesus said to her: "Go in peace; your faith has made you whole." By her action on that first Easter Sunday the faith of

(Continued on page 8)

More Than 300 Women Serve as UPCUSA Clergy

A total of 116 women now serve the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. as parish pastors, according to a recent report in *Concern*, magazine of United Presbyterian Women. They serve in parishes across the United States in a variety of situations. There are 57 clergy couples; at least 14 couples serve as pastors together or as co-pastors of United Presbyterian churches.

Six women serve on presbytery staffs. One, Rev. Margrethe Brown, became the first clergywoman to be elected an executive presbyter, of Genesee Valley Presbytery in New York, while her husband was an associate executive of the Synod of the Covenant in Columbus, Ohio. *Concern* reports this may have helped influence the Synod of the Covenant to request a change in the United Presbyterian *Book of Order* in 1977. Last year that synod voted to overture the 190th General Assembly, which will meet this coming May, to make appropriate changes in the *Book of Order* to allow an ordained husband and ordained wife to share executive and administrative positions. At present the Stated Clerk has ruled that chapter 39 bans any such sharing of administrative office.

Five clergywomen serve on the staff of United Presbyterian Women, the church's official organization for women. UPW adopted a resolution at its quadrennial meeting at Purdue University in 1976 encouraging the support of women seminarians; later the National Executive Committee of UPW recommended that the Vocation Agency and United Presbyterian Women cooperate in securing women seminarians to preach in congregations, as a means of interpreting UPW and at the same time providing churches with an opportunity to hear women who are preparing for full-time ministry. An ordained Presbyterian pastor, Ann Dubois Conrad, coordinates employment opportunities for the UPCUSA Vocation Agency.

Rev. Conrad says the major hurdle women pastors must surmount in seeking calls is attitude. "Many people have never seen women function as clergy." She stresses clergy women must be active and visible. In addition to the cooperation her office shares with UPW recruiting women seminarians as interpreters in congregations, Rev. Conrad says, "An excellent way to increase visibility is to have women serve as interim 'supply' or pastors-at-large. Currently 35 UPCUSA women are serving in this capacity."

A total of more than 300 women are ordained as "ministers of the Word" in

the UPCUSA, which has accepted women as clergy since 1956. (The issue had been before many General Assemblies, beginning in 1872.) Ten are black women; one is Hispanic. At least one of these women serves on a seminary faculty.

"The number of women clergy will continue to grow as women seek to serve the church in a variety of ways," says Rev. Conrad. "Due to the long and ingrained history of exclusion of women as clergy, it is crucial that all of us speak out, and actively encourage and support the placement of women." The report was prepared by the Rev. Jean Huffman of the Vocation Agency staff and written as an article for *Concern* by Penelope Morgan Colman.

A number of questions relating to the phenomenon of sexual equality in church and society were addressed at a two-day symposium held by United Presbyterians in Chicago November 3 and 4. It was jointly sponsored by the church's Council on Women and the Church and Council of Theological Seminaries. Theme of the gathering, which attracted more than 150 persons, was "In Christ . . . Neither Male Nor Female."

Questions asked included: What are the prospects for theology and the church as women assume larger roles as clergy and lay leaders? How can seminary communities help the church think at a deeper level on this matter? A series of papers inquired into opportunities and problems in Biblical interpretation, theological anthropology and the impact on the church of its involvement in and with society.

Men and women theologians presented the papers and shared in the closing panel which explored the implications of sexual equality for the church, both ecclesiastically and sociologically. Moderator Arnold Come, president of San Francisco Theological Seminary, posed four questions: 1. Are we, in the 20th century, entirely clear about the Christian faith and sexuality? 2. How can we rid

theology of sexist thought in the absence of female theologians? 3. Are there enough serious Christians in the church to make a Christian view of sexuality work—specifically, how are women clergy to be accepted in the United Presbyterian Church? 4. Do not the demonic structures of our society make it impervious to the impact of a Christian view of sexuality?

Henderlite Chosen President of COCU

The Rev. Dr. Rachel Henderlite of Austin, Texas, the first woman ordained a minister in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, was elected president of the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) at its recent meeting in Dayton, Ohio.

Dr. Henderlite moved to Austin from Richmond, Virginia, late last year to become professor of Christian Education at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Formerly vice president of COCU, she has been active in the movement toward church union for, at some times, as many as nine denominations since 1962.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa who received her Ph.D. from Yale University Divinity School, Dr. Henderlite has written *Exploring the Old Testament*, *Exploring the New Testament*, *A Call to Faith, Paul, Christian and World Traveler*, *Forgiveness and Hope*, and *The Holy Spirit in Christian Education*. She is also a contributing editor to *Presbyterian Outlook*, official publication of her denomination.

British Pastor Celebrates 50 Years of Ministry

In a recent letter to June Knapp British IAWM member Shiela Sardeson reported that Rev. Margaret Fullerton had just celebrated 50 years of ministry—"a Jubilee in a Jubilee year."

A reception was held for her during an afternoon and a Thanksgiving Service in the evening. Although Rev. Fullerton is 87 and cannot see very well, she gave the blessing in a very strong voice.

Margaret Fullerton was ordained in Leeds and with a younger colleague did remarkable work in an inner city congregation there. For a time Shiela Sardeson helped the two with a girls club until called to serve another congregation.

Assembly to Feature Alice Snow—

(Continued from page 1)

church and leave brochure invitations. Occasional visitors and regular worshippers alike express feelings that they do count and that the congregation cares about them.

Parishioners are largely, but not completely, retirees from all over the United States. "They are people who are top-notch in their former professions and business, and their intellectual outlook is a real challenge to me," reports Pastor Snow. In addition to her lively ministry in Sedona, she chairs the Committee on the Ministry of the UCC's Southwest Conference and thus sits on the conference's Board of Directors. At the last biennial meeting of the conference she served as chaplain.

A graduate of Smith College and Andover Newton Theological School, Alice B. Snow was first ordained to serve the Congregational Church in Clintonville, Wisc., after her husband's death in 1966. She served there for seven years before moving to Arizona; for two years of that time she was vice moderator and then moderator of the Wisconsin Conference, UCC. She has served in several capacities on the executive board of the International Association of Women Ministers.

Registration Data

The 1978 Assembly will begin with dinner in Weatherly Hall of Brite Divinity School at 6 p.m. on July 24, and will conclude at noon on July 27. Total cost for sharing a double room with linens furnished and three evening meals is \$50. Breakfast and lunch can be eaten in the cafeteria for small sums; each person will pay for these in addition to the room and board fee. The registration fee of \$15 is additional.

Deadline for registration is June 1; checks for \$65 should be made out to the International Association of Women Ministers and sent to Rev. M. Pauline Thames at 3057 Rogers Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76109 as soon as possible. Anyone sending registrations who cannot attend will be reimbursed on whatever percentage of funds is available after all bills for the Assembly are paid. Persons attempting to register after June 1 will be admitted if space can be found.

Additional leadership for the Assembly program is still being sought. Daily sessions will include presen-

tations and small group opportunities to explore facts of "Woman as Proclaimer" and IAWM business sessions; president Beverly Faulk of Commercial Point, Ohio, will preside at the business sessions.

The April-June issue will bring news about Chaplain Catherine Williams; Wednesday preacher Coral Cotton Winn and featured speakers Emma Justus and Nancy Heimer.

Travel Information

Vice President Thames reports that many flights enter the Dallas-Fort Worth airport from all parts of North America every day and that some very reasonable rates are available to residents of the southwest area of United States. A Surtran Bus from the airport to Fort Worth costs \$3.50; taxi fare to TCU from the point of disembarkation is an additional \$3.00 with some reduction in the rate for two or more passengers sharing a cab. The airport is so far from Fort Worth that it probably will not be possible for anyone to offer to pick up persons attending the Assembly. For those who drive there are excellent roads in every direction.

Although Texas is hot and dry in July, all Brite Divinity School buildings are air conditioned, reports the program coordinator.

Students at Brite Divinity School at Fort Worth and at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas are excited about having the Assembly at Brite, adds Rev. Thames. They join the Texas IAWM members in welcoming you to their area and look forward to meeting you. Register today!

Special Plus, Part 2, Offers to Relate Pastors, Sem. Women

The IAWM Assembly of 1976 gave birth to a program for matching seminarians with pastors for a get acquainted look at ministry done by a woman. It was called "Special Plus" in recognition of the lack of opportunities for women students to encounter women pastors. Our seminary members were invited to apply for a week of experience with a woman already serving. The response was enthusiastic. The results were minimal. Various pressures were cited by both the seminarians applying and the pastors supervising. No successful matches were made.

But, responding to the enthusiasm expressed and the deep heart-felt needs, the 1977 Assembly was led to try again using another approach. An *ad hoc* committee comprised of June Heath Knapp, Dr. Barbara Brown Zikmund, Dr. Sarah (Sally) Edwards, and Myrna Tuttle recommended to the Assembly that 1) seminaries in the North East, in the Chicago area, and in the Indiana-Ohio areas be contacted by letter; 2) the seminaries would be provided with a list of ordained women within driving distance; 3) several suggestions be made concerning how these ordained women could be helpful to the seminary in its tasks of nurturing students; and 4) the ordained women in these areas would be contacted by letter enlisting their cooperation. The Assembly approved the recommendation and Special Plus, Part 2 was born.

—MYRNA TUTTLE, COORDINATOR

Register Today for the 1978 IAWM Assembly

**At Brite Divinity School
Fort Worth, Texas**

**Cost: \$50 for Dinners & Room
(3 nights)
\$15 for Registration**

**Mail Reservations to:
Rev. M. Pauline Thames
3057 Rogers Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76109**

Name _____

Street/Local Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip/PC _____

All reservations MUST be received by June 1!

Ordination—

(Continued from page 1)

Lungren Hunt of Minneapolis wrote the ordination service and preached a sermon based on the Magnificat. She spoke of “the mighty forces of sex prejudice and clericalism (which) have, through God’s judgment, been put down from their thrones.” She explained: “The mighty have not been put down and their thrones emptied just so we who are of low degree might rule in their place. We are being exalted, but not to fill thrones. We are being exalted to a place on the Cross. We are lifted up to suffer for and with others. We are raised up to bear one another’s burdens, to understand how the world sees itself and to minister in it. By the mercies of God, we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)”

LCA Women Clergy

As the AELC was ordaining its first woman pastor, the Lutheran Church in America, first North American Lutheran body to approve ordination of women in 1970, was compiling a progress report on women pastors in that church.

Of 57 women ordained since November 1970, 39 are serving as parish pastors, according to a recent report of the LCA’s Division for Professional Leadership. Four more are chaplains at hospitals or homes for the aging, four are on leave from call, three are campus pastors (two at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.) Two, IAWM members Jean Bozeman and Margaret Krych, are members of seminary faculties. One each serve as: an urban ministry coordinator in a midwestern city, a staff member of the LCA’s Division for Parish Services and a World Council of Churches staff member in Geneva, Switzerland. Two women pastors have died.

Twenty of the 39 in parishes are sole parish pastors; one has a congregation

of 756 members. Nineteen serve congregations with more than one pastor. Twenty-eight are married; 27 are single. Fifteen married LCA pastors; one is wed to a seminarian and one to a Baptist pastor. Nine of the 15 married to LCA pastors are jointly serving congregations with their husbands.

Some clergy couples serve a single congregation, splitting one job. Rev. Margaret Krych’s husband is a parish pastor; another woman is a mission developer and her husband a professor. Thirteen women pastors serve multiple-church parishes; in eight cases a woman is the only pastor serving a multiple parish. One husband and wife serve four congregations.

The 55 pastors serve in 23 of the LCA’s 33 synods. Central Pennsylvania has four. At present 194 women are preparing for ordination in seminaries, including three blacks and one Hispanic woman. They represent 17 percent of total seminary enrollment.

Worldwide, according to a recent report of the Lutheran World Federation, there are 573 Lutheran women pastors. Sweden tops all with 208; four Lutheran church bodies in Germany include 120; Denmark has 90. The LCA with 55 is fourth; East Germany has 42; Norway and the American Lutheran Church are tie with 27 each and in Brazil there are four Lutheran women pastors. Most of the ordinations occurred during the past 20 years. This report clearly does not include Pastor Otte-Murphy and probably was compiled prior to her ordination.

Mary of Magdala—

(Continued from page 5)

Mary Magdalene has made all of her sisters and brothers whole not only in sharing eternal life through baptism but also in sharing fully in the proclamation of the gospel as an Apostle of the Lord. Amen, and Shalom to all people.

Palmer Celebration Causes Furor In British Church

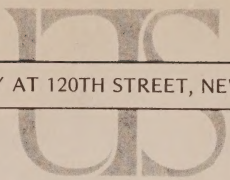
When Episcopal Priest Allison Palmer accepted invitations to preach and celebrate the Eucharist in two British congregations in October, she caused a furor in the Church of England. The invitations were issued through IAWM members Phoebe and Alfred Willetts, to their church in Manchester and the University Church in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Some critics, according to the *Christian Century*, believe Rev. Palmer’s action was a tactical mistake. The subject of women priests was debated two years ago by the General Synod, who affirmed by a substantial majority of votes that there are no objections *in principle* to ordination of women to the priesthood. Nevertheless, the Synod has not been willing to take the juridical steps necessary before women can be ordained.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and bishops of both Manchester and Newcastle are on record as approving ordination of women. All, however, deplored this breaking of the law and lack of respect for the mind of the Church of England as a whole.

Supporters of Rev. Palmer’s action point out that the Christian gospel is intended to deliver humanity from slavish obedience to rules and regulations and also that the law is not to stand in the way of the Spirit who sets men and women free.

At meetings during which it deliberated the invitation, the council of the university church in Newcastle faced the question of what the appropriate response would be had the Church of England retained a rule forbidding a black male priest from presiding at the Eucharist. If it would have been right to disregard such a rule, went the argument, it is equally appropriate to disregard a rule discriminating against a priest who is a woman.



November 1, 1979

Dear Friend,

This letter is to inform you of the work that is being done by the coordinators of the Women and Religion Archive Project sponsored by Union Theological Seminary. During the ~~past~~ year we have researched the feasibility of a nationwide project that would network archival and manuscript material dealing with women and religion. Through contacts made with archivists, librarians and scholars in seminaries, universities, colleges and historical societies we have learned of the significant number of untapped collections in this field. Most of these collections are not used by the student or scholar because their identity and location is not readily available.

The Project was initiated by Union students and professors who were concerned about the unavailability of these primary source documents to scholars. At a time when the growth of women's studies is expanding and maturing, the role of women in American history through active participation in religious organizations is recognized as a main source and focus of present and future scholarship. It is therefore necessary that the location and content of these collections in the field of women and religion be organized in a bibliographic guide to aid further scholarly research.

Since January we have been researching the best means of organizing the Project, examining the necessary stages in planning and funding. In the spring we prepared and submitted a planning grant to funding organizations to solicit funds in order to work through the summer. We received financial support from a private foundation as well as from several denominations. This money enabled us to travel to the University of Minnesota to consult with Andrea Hinding, Director of the Walter Library and editor of Women's History Sources: A Guide to Archive and Manuscript Collections in the U.S. This trip was especially important as it allowed us to become familiar with the full range of organizational strategies and procedures involved in an archival networking project of national scope.

Presently we are looking into the possibility of inter-institutional support for the final stages of the Women and Religion Archive Project. In a paper prepared for the National Endowment for the Humanities by Harold Cannon, Director of the Division of Research Grants for NEH, a recommendation was made for multi-institutional backing for large scale projects. We feel it will be to our advantage to seriously consider the option of inter-institutional support for the Women and Religion Archive Project. At this time we are investigating the possibilities for shared support between any or all of the following three groups: seminaries, seminary libraries and denominations.

We are asking that you take some time to share with your colleagues the news about the Women and Religion Archive Project. We welcome your suggestions and comments. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Project please do contact us.

Sincerely,

*Lee Coppernoll*Lee Coppernoll,
Co-coordinator
UTS-WRAP

212-662-7100, x.298

